A WONDERFUL STORY FOR BOYS WILL BEGIN IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

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A FATAL FLIRTATION

BY GRANVILLE OSBORNE

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CHAPTER I.

"Emmie, what is it like to be in love?" The girl thus strangely addressed turned round with a start.

"Why do you ask me that, Jennet?" she said gently. "You should not be thinking about such things—yet."

"Pooh!" retorted Jennet. "You forget that I shall be seventeen tomorrow. Lots of girls have lovers before they are my age—but that's not being in love! They are too silly for anything. You are in love, Em—I know you are!"

"Jennet! How dare you?"

Emmie's slender figure assumed a sudden dignity as she turned, crimson-cheeked, to defend her precious secret from the tall schoolgirl who sat swinging her long legs on the edge of the bed, in a little attic bedroom which the sisters shared.

"Don't be cross," said Jennet coolly. "Why can't you tell me all about it, Em? You would feel ever so much happier."

"Tell you all about it?" repeated Emmeline to herself, with an involuntary shudder. Then she recovered herself. "How silly you are, child! Who has been putting such ideas into your head?"

"You yourself," returned the other unabashed. "You are quite changed nowadays, Em—I have noticed it ever since I came home. You don't eat or sleep properly; you have grown quite thin, and you are always going off for long walks by yourself—"

Emmeline turned white, but Jennet went on, unconscious of the depth of the emotion she was exciting.

"I was awake last night, and I heard you crying. Now, Em, what is there to cry about? He has always worshiped the ground you tread on, and I am certain that he would propose tomorrow if you gave him the least encouragement—"

"He!" panted Emmeline. "Jennet, how do you know? What do you mean?"

"I know because I have eyes in my head," replied the younger girl, half laughing, half angry. "Oh, you ridiculous little goose! Why, half the parish knows that Mr. Marsh—the Reverend Theo Marsh—is head over ears in love with his vicar's eldest niece. Even Uncle David himself has an inkling of the state of affairs."

"Mr. Marsh!" whispered Emmeline. She struggled for an instant and then, bursting into hysterical laughter, she flung herself down on the bed and hid her fair head in the pillows.

Jennet looked at her sister with grave disapproval.

"Stop that, Emmeline!" she said at last. "It is Mr. Marsh, isn't it? But of course it must be, for there is nobody else."

"What a goose I am!" gasped Emmeline at last. "Now, look here, Jennet—you have discovered my secret, and made me betray myself. But if, as you insist, you are really old enough to understand such things, you will never speak to me in this way until I give you leave."

Jennet looked impressed. As a rule hers was by far the stronger will of the two, and it was something quite new to hear the gentle Emmeline issuing her commands.

"All right," she said. "But hadn't you better wash your face? The tea-bell will ring in a minute."

Emmeline sighed and obeyed. In a few minutes all trace of her agitation had disappeared, and she seemed almost herself again when the two girls entered the dining room where their uncle awaited them.

The Reverend David Millard was a white-haired, gentle old man, whose gradually failing eyesight rendered the services of a curate absolutely necessary, although as a matter of fact the tiny moorland parish of Cradley was well within one man's powers of working. But Mr. Millard was a great student, and something of a recluse, and the parish might have suffered had it not been for Emmeline and Mr. Marsh. Jennet, who had only just left boarding school, had undertaken to read to her uncle, and to copy out his notes on the book he was writing, so that both girls led busy, well-occupied lives, and scarcely realized the dullness and monotony of their surroundings.

"My dears," said the vicar, "you are late; the tea has been standing for nearly five minutes."

Emmeline stationed herself behind the tea tray and Jennet began to cut slices of the home-made bread.

"Here comes Mr. Marsh," she observed, carefully refraining from looking at her sister, as the curate entered. He was a tall, fair young man who stooped and wore spectacles. He was very kind-hearted, extremely shy, and—as Jennet had remarked—head over ears in love with his vicar's eldest niece, a fact patent to the village at large, and to every one save the absent-minded vicar himself, who had never realized that Emmeline was no longer a child.

"Come in, Marsh, you are just in time for tea," said Mr. Millard hospitably. "Jennet, my love, another cup!"

The vicarage menage only boasted of one servant, so Jennet herself went to get the cup and plate, and when she returned the curate was explaining the errand upon which he had come.

"Alice Scott is much worse, sir," he said. "I had a message this afternoon, begging me to go up to the farm as soon as possible. I do not think she can outlive the night. She—she is most anxious to see Miss Emmeline once more before she dies."

"I will go up at once," said Emmeline promptly. Alice Scott, an old Sunday school pupil of hers, was dying of consumption, and, though the house was nearly two miles away, across the moors, Emmeline had been indefatigable in her visits to the poor girl.

"I'll come with you!" cried Jennet.

But Mr. Millard protested. He had some important writing for Jennet to finish, and the curate, who would willingly have supplied her place, was detained by an evening service in the little mission church some miles in the opposite direction. Jennet yielded with good grace, and Emmeline, who had taken no part in the discussion, stifled a sigh of relief as she left the room to put on her hat. She did not want her sister's company that evening, and she had been wondering if it would be possible to go out-of-doors by herself. The fates had indeed propitious, and were sending Marsh in the direction she wished to go.

The sun that had shone with fiery enthusiasm throughout the long June day was eclipsed that evening by heavy, white-tipped clouds, creeping slowly up from the west, and a hush lay over the ordinarily parched earth, a silence broken only by an occasional moan of distant thunder.

"There is going to be a storm," said Jennet, laying down her pen with a sigh of relief. "You don't want me any longer, do you, uncle? I must hurry to meet Emmie ere she is so afraid of thunder, and cannot bear to be out in it alone."

The wide spreading moors looked weird and solemn under the threatening sky. Jennet was not susceptible to weather as a rule, but when she had walked for a mile and a half on the rough beaten cart-track without meeting any one, she became conscious of a sudden craving for companionship. The storm was sweeping up with portentous rapidity. How frightened Emmeline would be!

Perhaps she has stayed at the farm," thought Jennet, pulling her tam-o'-shanter down over her eyes as the first flash of lightning was followed by a shrieking peal immediately by a long crackling peal of thunder. The storm was near enough to be developed in all its magnificence in such an exposed spot, and it was with a sensation of intense relief that Jennet caught sight behind the briar fence of the house, with its cluster of farm buildings and its stack-yard, that stood apart from the heather-covered moors. She did not doubt for an instant that she would find her sister still there.

Jennet was almost within reach of her goal, when suddenly the wood-head, half deafened by the thunder and dazzled by the constant lightning, when she came upon a figure crouched with an umbrella carried by a young man wearing a long, light macintosh coat, standing in the middle of the direction of the village, and brushed past her with such violence as to cause her almost to obtain a glimpse of his face.

A stranger on the moors, and in such weather! It was unusual indeed. Jennet looking round after him, saw that he was carrying a bag, and she wondered at the slight discourtesy he had shown to her, and at his impudence in uttering an umbrella. But she was out of breath and breathless to waste many thoughts upon him.

The kitchen door of the farmhouse stood wide open, but the kitchen was empty, and the girl could see her sister's chair by the fire, and listening to the subdued stops and voices in the nick-room overhead. It was her first visit to the farm since Emmeline left from school, and she did not feel sufficiently familiar with the surroundings to make her way up to the dying girl's room unasked. At last the wooden stairs creaked under Miss Scott's heavy footsteps, and the good woman herself appeared.

She started, frowned, peering at her visitor through the gloom of the premature twilight. "Why, Miss Jennet's late," Jennet hath it!" Dear me, lass, but you have grown gradely an' bonny I' the face. Master Jack was walking wi' me when Alice had one of her bad fainting attacks and I wouldn't leave her."

"I suppose Emmeline is with her now?" asked Jennet. "I'm so glad she stayed, Mrs. Scott. It is terrible to-night, isn't it?" Even as she spoke part of her speech was lost in a crash of thunder.

Mrs. Scott put her apron to her eyes. "Eh, it's fair daunnin'!" she cried. "I'm worritted to be over my lodger, a young gentleman as has been here sketchin' for the last month or more before the storm broke. He had sent on his things and was walking over the moors to Haven Station, and the silly body must have got muddled in the storm and lost his way."

"Did he wear a long macintosh, and was he carrying a bag?" asked the girl, "Why, I met him!"

"Yes, that was him, missy, but what could he have doin' there, after starting nigh on an hour and a half ago, fair baffled me," returned Mrs. Scott. "But there, I've gone through enough to-day without worritin'. I hadn't even th' sense to bid Miss Emmeline bide a bit longer, seeing as th' storm was backin' up when she left th' house."

"But Em is here—upstairs with Alice?" asked Jennet quickly.

APPENDICITIS

Not at all Necessary to Operate in Many Cases.

Automobiles and Appendicitis scare some people before they are hit.

Appendicitis is often caused by too much starch in the bowels. Starch is hard to digest and is often undigested when it reaches —also tends to form cakes in the cecum. (That's the blind pouch at entrance to the appendix.)

A N. H. girl had appendicitis, but lived on milk for a month and Grape-Nuts and got well without an operation.

She says: "Five years ago while at school I suffered terribly with constipation and indigestion." (Too much starch, white bread, potatoes, etc., which all turn to starch.)

"Soon after I left school I had an attack of appendicitis and for thirteen weeks lived on milk and water. When I recovered enough to eat solid food there was nothing that would agree with me, until a friend recommended Grape-Nuts.

"When I began to eat Grape-Nuts I weighed 88 lbs., but soon grew to 115 lbs. The cheese and coffee left me entirely and now I am like a new person."

Of little Grape-Nuts dissolved in hot water or milk would have been much better for this case than milk alone, for the starchy part of the wheat and barley is changed into a form of digestible sugar in making Grape-Nuts.) Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

"Eh, no, missy!" replied the good woman, shaking her head. "Miss Emmeline said only a short visit this time. She said she must be getting home, and I mind me now that th' clock struck half-past six as she went down th' stairs. Alice was put about, but we couldn't keep her."

"Half-past six!" repeated Jennet. "And it is nearly half-past seven now. She ought to be home by this time, and yet how could we have missed each other?"

Mrs. Scott looked at her.

"I'm fair muddled," she admitted, "What wi' one thing and another I don't know how I'm to look."

"But Emmeline—my sister!" Jennet interrupted.

"Nay, how can I tell?" answered Mrs. Scott. "She come in looking for all th' world like a little white ghosty, whiles I was talkin' Mr. Donald's receipted bill into the parlour, and she went straight up to Alice's room. I followed her there as soon as I'd seen th' last of Mrs. Donald, but she seemed restless-like, and Alice—"

"I can't understand it, but I mustn't stay to talk about it now, dear Mrs. Scott," said Jennet, without heeding the shrill protest that followed. She ran down the room and hurried under the dull gray sky was unbroken save for a few white specks of scattered sheep up here and there the shaft of a disused pit. But nowhere could Jennet obtain a glimpse of her sister's graceful figure. She was more uneasiness became panic-stricken dismay. A few minutes ago, Jennet thought, she had her sister had not returned.

She will be here shortly," declared her uncle, alarmed by the girl's unwonted agitation. But the long minutes glided into half an hour, and the stormy twilight was fast giving way to night, but still there was no sign of Emmeline.

"I cannot bear it any longer!" cried Jennet suddenly, after the half-hour had passed at night. "Something terrible has happened. Can you not see that I am frightened to death? She may have been lying somewhere near the very path along which I passed, with a splendid chance of being struck by lightning, worse than that! But I must go to her—I must go!"

She rushed out of the house, and, within a few minutes of her departure, was joined on the moors by a man hurrying the village, and instituting a regular search for the missing girl.

Jennet scarcely knew where she went. She was alone on the moors again, wildly beckoned through the darkness, and calling wildly to her sister.

"Emmeline, dear, darling! Don't be frightened—it is only I!"

It was all in vain. The wind was soon pushing her way through damp masses of bracken and heather, stumbling and bruising herself against the rough stones, but Jennet felt she never once stopping her piteous cry. And in a few hours' time she would have to expect to receive an answer; some instinct seemed to tell her that pretty, gentle Emmeline would never be heard forever on earth.

"Jennet! What was that?"

Jennet, pushing the floating strands of wet hair from her ghostly face, paused in the darkness, and then there was a faint, broken cry—the merest whispering moaning—from the ground, from the ground beneath her feet.

"Alice! It is Jennet!"

Could it be Emmeline speaking?

"Jennet! Help!"

The girl hesitated no longer. She could see now that she was standing on the edge of the pit, and she knelt down by the wall that had guarded it had been suffered to crumble away, and it had now become a mere low, loose stone boundary. She knew that Emmeline was speaking to her, and she groped blindly for the little body lay, crushed and bleeding, in the awful darkness—and, falling on her knees, she dragged her sister up into her arms.

"Courage, darling! I have found you—I am coming to you!"

Once more the faint hollow cry came up from the unseen depths, and then Jennet lingered for but another moment upon the brink and began to slip, feet down-wards, clinging desperately to the crumbling sides, and fighting death, inch by inch, in an unequal contest on his own ground. The darkness, the horror, the conquest had not the shaft been partly filled with loose stones, upon the topmost one of which poor Emmeline had found her death-bed, she did not hear her sister's quick panting breath, her little moans of pain and fall, when Jennet, who fully believed that she was descending to Emmeline's side, half stunned and wholly bewildered, with her arms thrown over the body of the stranger that she had brought down with her by the fall, fell, with a dull, stone one was sighing softly in her ear—so.

"Emmeline!"

With a sudden rush consciousness returned to the brave girl, and Jennet raised herself upon her elbow, and looked at her. She could not see Emmeline's face, but her tears were raining down upon it as she touched the cold hands.

"You have come, Jennet," she whispered. "I thought you would—I didn't want to die all alone."

"You will not die, my darling!" cried the younger sister, with a sudden pang of fear.

"I have been lying here so long—so long!" sighed Emmeline. "It wasn't his fault that I fell, Jennet. He told me to meet him here when was going away. I had only known him a month, but I did love him so. I thought he loved me, but he didn't—he didn't!"

A convulsive shudder shook the fallen girl from head to foot, and Jennet thought her dying, but after a time Emmeline rallied, and went on:

"I was alone when I went to see Alice—he was sketching. And since that we have not nearly every day, and yesterday he told me that he loved me."

"Oh, Emmie, my poor darling!"

"I believed him," moaned the dying girl, "But when he said 'Good-by,' and I asked him when he would come back, and that my heart was beating, he laughed, and said something about 'our little flirtation,' and told me I should soon forget him. Oh, Jennet, my heart broke then!"

The poor girl gave a sharp, gasping sob, but Jennet's arms were deep.

"He tried to kiss me," Emmeline whispered, "but I pushed him away—and he went. Oh, Jennet, he was very cruel—and I loved him so! I would have done anything for him, but he didn't want me—I am nothing to him."

"You are something to him some day, Emmeline," said Jennet in a hard voice, for the other did not even hear her—she was growing weaker every instant.

"How did I come here?" she asked feebly. "He walked a few minutes myself on the ground and prayed to die—and when the storm came I thought I was safe—but—but—Ah, I am falling now—"

Jennet put her arms around her sister, and her head, bidding her be brave, for help could not be far off. But Emmeline's head fell back in exhaustion. The fall had inflicted fatal injuries on her delicate body, and she knew it, and had no wish to live.

"It was wrong to deceive you all," she said, "but I could not tell me not to speak about him. He said he was incognito for a month, and begged me that if I would be patient a little longer—but he didn't love me—"

"Yes, you, Emmie—dearly, dearly!" cried Jennet.

Emmeline gave the faintest shade of a laugh.

"You, yes, dear—but you will know—you will understand, some day," she replied. "And you will be happier—better—"

Her voice died away, and Jennet thought she was no longer conscious of her surroundings.

Slowly, heavily, the moments dragged on. Jennet, with Emmeline's head on her lap, was praying for a miracle for her, for help that had delayed so long. The lightning had ceased flicker, and the mouth of the shaft was dark.

"We shall die together," thought Jennet. But, at last, Emmeline stirred in her sister's lap, and she knew that her life-work still lay before her. She must live for her sake, claim her until she had seen her sister avenged.

Emmeline was babbling weakly. Her mind still ran on the brief, delirious love-dream that had ended in so fiery a method into the calm sky of her quiet, uneventful life.

"I do trust you, Bertie," she whispered; "I trust you as much as I love you, but I shall be glad when you are back, Bertie dear," she went on, as Jennet's lips touched her cold cheek; "I did not mean to vex you, Bertie!"

How long this lasted Jennet never knew, but it seemed to her centuries before she was cramped and bruised, and aching from head to foot, but she had not a thought for herself.

A faint gray square was marking the mouth of the shaft, and Jennet called aloud again in her natural voice:

"Help us, for Jennet," she said, "I am going—to—sleep."

The last words were scarcely audible, and, in an agony of desperation, the young girl shrieked again for the help that she knew must be near at hand.

This time her cry was answered by Theodore Marsh, who, as he wandered, hatless and with bent head, over and across the moors, had paused for an instant between the hills of the shaft, and heard the pitiful wail.

In less than half an hour nearly the whole male population of the parish was on the spot. They had been scouring the moors with lanterns and flares, and when they and their womenfolk were waiting anxiously for their return to the village were sleeping in the village that night.

The old vicar and his curate stood side by side with Theodore Marsh when the men who had come down with the ropes succeeded in hearing their burdens in their strong arms.

"Both there—one dead."

There was no need to proclaim the fact for Emmeline's sweet little face, unstirred, save for its pallor, was the stamp of death. Jennet, after a glance, Theodore Marsh turned away with a groan of agony.

Jennet, regaining with the insensibility that had stolen over her, saw the whole scene—the awed faces of the men, bending over the child still dawn, the anxious on his knees in the wet bracken, with his head bared, and Emmeline lying quietly on the coat that some one had spread over the turf, her sightless eyes turned up to the cloudy heaven, and her face set in their last sweet smile.

"She is dead," said Jennet. And then, before the spectators realized her intention, she staggered to her feet, and went and knelt beside her dead sister.

"Emmeline," she whispered, "listen while I swear to you, I, your sister, before God in Heaven and on earth that, come what may, I will avenge your wrong—your broken heart and your cruel death!"

The bystanders could not hear what she was saying, and they hesitated to lead her away.

"Jennet—Jennet, my poor child!" quavered her uncle, and the girl heard him and obeyed his call. She had taken her oath, holding the dead girl's hand in her own as she spoke, but the inevitable reaction came suddenly upon her, and she flung herself sobbing like the old man's arms.

The events of the next few hours were a merciful blank to her, and when she recovered consciousness she found that no suspicions had been excited in connection with Emmeline's terrible fall. A girl's timidity in a storm was quite enough to account for her accident; the people shuddered as they pictured her, half blinded by lightning, struggling through the gap in the wall and falling headlong to her death.

A strange restlessness seemed to possess Jennet, and Emmeline's dying words—"Bertie dear"—she set off for the farm, to obtain the first clue to the identity of the man she meant to hunt down—to the end of the world if necessary.

Mrs. Scott, bewildered and half suspicious, could give her visitor little more information than she already possessed. Her lodger had left no address; he might come back again the following summer, but it was not likely. He was a young, well-spoken young gentleman, and a beautiful painter, but he never talked of himself, and she was not in the habit of reading other people's concerns.

Jennet dared not ask no more. She fancied that the woman looked at her with some curiosity, and she changed the subject. Only a few minutes later, when she was sitting beside Alice's bed, Mrs. Scott brought up the name of Jennet.

"Look here, miss," she said displaying a sheet of paper accidentally left in the sketching block and containing a roughly-outlined sketch of a girl's head. "I come across it in the fire, but this paper-basket after he had gone; 'twere all crumpled-up like, but I smoothed it out. I fancy the lady may be you'd like to have it, for 'tis the very image of poor Miss Emmeline."

It was indeed a fine sketch, and Jennet knew that the mother and daughter were watching her, and that the slightest hesitation—

"Yes, there is a likeness. Thank you, Mrs. Scott, I will keep it."

The drawing offered a last proof, if any were needed, to the truth of Emmeline's story, for, despite its unfinished condition, every line of the grandmother's head was there, and every sensitive profile was wonderfully life-like. Jennet's eyes were attracted to the name at once, and she was alone she pressed it to her lips, and breathed a vow of vengeance upon the love. She was only seventeen, but the events of that one awful night had changed her from a girl into a woman. She was, in grave, thoughtful woman.

Mr. Marsh was the only who was changed. Mr. Millard never quite recovered from the shock of his niece's tragic death. He grew more feeble and broken every day, and before the first snowfall of the winter lay thick upon the moors, he was laid to rest in the little country churchyard. His death left Jennet alone in the world, with her scanty store of thirty pounds a year to stand between herself and starvation. She had no relations, no friends, except those she had no fears for her future, for something within her assured her that she would live to accomplish her sister's unfinely fate.

Mr. Marsh would gain have helped the sister in her new position, but Jennet knew was nothing he could do, for the girl declared her intention of leaving Haven at once, and, as a means to this end, she took a situation in a French school, and her old surroundings knew her no more.

CHAPTER II.

"I'm going, too. If you don't take me I shall bite and scratch and scream and——"

"Hallo! Hallo! What's the matter?"

Bert brought his angry war dances to an abrupt conclusion, and glanced up shamefacedly at his tall sister.

"I want to meet her—Miss Dare, the new governess. She promised. "And I know Miss Dare won't let me!"

"Sir Maurice gave orders that Master Herbert was not to come in the dog-cart, Mr. Bertie," interrupted the aggrieved voice of Thomas, the groom, from a dozen paces of kicks. "He believed that outrageous hint time, and—Have done now, Master Bert, you're a big boy!"

"Bert, I am ashamed of you!"

"I want to go," said the boy. "I might go if you were driving, Uncle Serge."

"I cannot," returned his uncle, who had other views respecting the disposal of his time, but, as was usually the case where Bert was concerned, he found that he had reckoned without his hosts. The lad, with many a boyish grievance and little fellow of six summers, was more than a match for his uncle. In fact he had yet to see the master and his governesses and a tutor within the past five months.

"I thought you'd come," he observed complacently, as he climbed into the dog-drive and informed the coachman that his services would be dispensed with. "I'd rather have Thomas, because he made such fun stopping at the Arkloe Arms"—"Bert!" interrupted his sister, "that old horse's head"—"for a glass of ale and a word with Patty," added the boy remorselessly. "Patty's the barmaid, you know."

"It's high time your governess arrived, young man," observed Sir Serge, as the trap went spinning down the long drive.

"I don't come, but she won't stay," Bert said, with the easy assurance of experience. "She'll find me too naughty, or she'll find you do, and then she'll be off. Object to the hunt—"

"The what?" interposed Serge.

"The haunt—the ghost, you know. Parsons calls it the haunt. I heard her talking about it to Parsons and Peacock. It is a woman, and it walks up and down the Oak Passage at night, and they wonder as how you can stand it, seeing as your room is there——"

"Nonsense! Rubbish! And, Bert, once for all, it is not necessary to copy the servants' mode of speech——"

"Hallo! Look out what you're about!" cried Bert, unheeding. They were rattling at a good pace through the picturesque

little village, where thatched cottages, half hidden in the blossoming damson trees, encircled the old gray church and its attendant vicarage. A girl was opening the gate that led into the road, and her dog, a little black terrier, had wriggled under the palings and was bounding right in front of the rapidly approaching dog-cart.

It was all over in a moment. There was a sharp yap, a stifled scream, and, though a quick movement by the driver's strong wrists averted the worst, the wheels had passed over the dog's hind leg.

A laborer who was passing ran to the horse's head, and Serge sprang down to the road where the girl was kneeling in the dust beside her injured pet.

"It was all my fault," she said, raising a pair of blue eyes to the man's perturbed face. "Tatters will run at every cart that passes and—oh, poor little fellow! —is he very badly hurt?"

"The leg is broken," replied Serge. "It is a marvel that the wheel did not pass over his body. Those dogs have been much worse."

"You," she said gratefully. "You pulled up so cleverly. Do you think that man over there would carry him into the rectory for me?"

"The rectory!" repeated Serge, wondering in connection this remarkably pretty girl could be to the elderly bachelor rector. She seemed to read his thoughts, for she added: "I am Rose Maple, Mr. Elliott's niece—I have come to spend the summer with him."

Serge rose to his feet and raised his hat. "And I, Rose, am Serge Duval, Sir Maurice's brother and agent," he began.

"If you don't come this instant-minute I shall call you a stupid man!" cried Berthe shrilly.

"Don't put down the reins!" shouted his uncle. "He is quite capable of it," he added hastily. "Frankie, Rose—can you carry the dog for the lady? Good-by, Miss Maple; I shall call, if I may, to enquire after your pet."

The dog-cart dashed off, and Rose went into the house. The rector and his old housekeeper were presently divided between admiration and dismay at the quiet girl who appeared in the somewhat trying interview that ensued between Tatters and the veterinary surgeon.

"I believe I could have done it as well myself," she observed afterwards, coming out into the garden, where the rector was diligently hunting for snails. "Give me the basket, Frankie, I am sorry it, and point out the little horrors—but I won't touch them. Now, Mr. Elliott, you know that my brother seemed to imagine that I knew all about them."

"Ah, very likely!" responded the rector absently. "The Arideos are the great foes hereabouts—and a nuisance, too, but a good family. The Hall is a fine old place. Sir Maurice is a widower, and, though barely thirty-five, he is partially paralyzed, and a complete invalid, poor fellow! Serge —he pronounces it Berge—lives with him and is his agent and right-hand man. If anything happens to Berthe he will succeed to the title and estate when Sir Maurice dies, for poor Lady Arkloe only survived Berthe a few hours."

Meanwhile Berthe was making his uncle's life a burden to him. The station was reached before the station without further mishap. The governess' train was due to arrive at the opposite platform, and Serge could not leave the horse, forbade the boy to cross the line.

"I don't see why," he was beginning for the twentieth time, when the bell rang and the white smoke of the engine was visible over the top of the steep cutting beyond the station.

Serge, occupied in soothing Diamond's fears, did not see a child slip away through the booking office and run down the platform in the wake of the station master and the train. The local train was still at some little distance, but the express was steaming past the station on the opposite direction, and had not the porter happened to glance over his shoulder he would never have found herself deprived of her pupil, and Serge's momentary anger would have cost him dear.

But honest Joe Dawes precipitated himself upon the child with such energy that, as he caught her in his arms, he tripped backwards, and they fell together, clearing the line, and rolling over and over to the bottom of the steep grassy bank below the signal box. With the roar of the express thundering and the shock of Joe's sudden onslaught and fall Bert was actually subdued into tears.

The train had stopped as Joe hauled the boy upon the platform, hatless, crumpled and sobbing.

Serge, who had found a boy to hold Diamond, came striding up. He was too horrified to avoid the culprit, and it was not until the train was on its way again, and the excitement subsided, that he even remembered his business at the station.

"The lady's waiting, sir," observed Joe, perfectly unconscious of half-sovereigns with a grin of delight. In his opinion they had "done something," for he was much the worse for his tumble.

Serge started and looked around. He saw a tall, slender girl, about twenty-five, it seemed, and very plainly dressed, with a pale, clear-cut face, chiefly remarkable for its intense pallor, and dark gray eyes that looked as though they had swept away the mirth that should be lingered in their depths. It was the face of a woman aged before her time, but it had a peculiar beauty of its own. People who understood such matters said of Jennet Dare that she condescended to take more pains over her personal appearance she might have tried successfully with many a full-fledged beauty; but, so far, the girl had cared for none of those things, and her neat coat and skirt and little black hat were of the severest cut.

The return drive was remarkably uneventful. Looking back upon it in days to come, Serge could not recall a word of the conversation. He privately voted the governess "slow," and the girl, for her part, thought him lamentably weak in his dealings with Bert.

By the time that she retired that night Jennet had gained a partial knowledge of her surroundings, and had been interviewed by Mrs. Talbot, the housekeeper, a quiet, fat old lady, who was nominally the head of his household and practically a cipher, for she suffered from Bert and hated Paul, left her room. Miss Dare had fought—and gained—a battle with Bert, and heard Paul's not reluctant admission that any one who could master the "precious child" would be indeed a treasure beyond all price.

Jennet's responsibilities did not weigh upon her, so far as Bert was concerned, she had been a fully-qualified governess now for the past five years, and had never come failed in her management of the most unruly pupil. But she was not a popular teacher. Children are quick to discover and resent a heart unsympathetic and cold, and Jennet Dare's whole life was centered upon self-absorbing ambition. The oath that she had taken as she knelt beside her dying sister-in-law's bed was to gain and the happiness that most women accept as their birth.

The man who had been the cause of Emmeline's untimely fate remained unknown to her, and Jennet knew that sooner or later he would cross her path. She was determined that, whenever it was, she should be ready.

She let I knew it!" whispered Jennet half aloud. "My darling, can you hear me? I am ready. Ready—I am quite ready!"

And then, turning to her boxes, she began to unpack and array her possessions, with a quick buckle on the armour of quiet reserve that had stood her so often in good stead. She was to be in the schoolroom that day, and for many a day to come, but there was no fear on the girl's part of being ill-at-ease. She was mistress of the situation from the first moment that she had met his match, and he grew angry and sullen.

Jennet saw very little of Serge, and her interviews with the master of the house were few and far between, for Sir Maurice disliked seeing his nephew, and Jennet was very sorry for him; it was sad to see such death-in-life, for the agony of his helplessness was terrible. He was not much older than his brother, and had evidently been a fine, handsome, manly man.

One afternoon, about a fortnight after Jennet's arrival at the Hall, the girl took sight of her pupil—as very unusual a sight, by-the-by—in the nursery busy and important, in the housekeeper's room.

"I'm playing with Bert now," he announced. "And now Milly and I are going to put them away in the storeroom, and Bert's going to help here and talk to you."

Mrs. Talbot, the housekeeper, looked more dismayed than honored when Jennet accepted this somewhat one-sided invitation and ensconced herself in an easy chair.

Bert ran off, following the still-room maid, and Mrs. Mellor took up her knitting and proceeded to entertain her visitor by complimenting her upon the improvement that had taken place in her pupil.

"It's a good child, bless his little heart," said the housekeeper, "and it was curious to see him so spoiled and fractious, for he minded no one, not even his father—and he's the only one he obeyed, has Sir Maurice."

"Has he been ill long?" asked Jennet.

Mrs. Mellor shook her head.

"Seven years, miss, come next November. It's a long time, I think—he got wet through and never changed his damp clothes for hours. It was a cruel shame, for he'd been subject to rheumatic fever. He never rightly got the better of that and the creeping paralysis took him at the time of her ladyship's death, six years ago.

"How sad it must be absolutely," Mrs. Mellor, I want to ask you something. I do not like to trouble Mrs. Talbot with such things, but I think you may help me. Master Herbert is very fond of talking about—about the past, and I think it is unhealthy for the child. The ghost is what I am afraid of being conjured. I am emotionally in the Old Passage. The whole thing is ridiculous, of course, but I—I feel the girl paused, and raised upwards at the moment with strange, wide blue eyes Jennet could not fathom. "I am nervous."

"It is she or her spirit!" she gasped. "Emmeline!"

But, though she would have shrieked the name aloud, her voice seemed paralyzed, and she could only return that vacant, unconscious gaze.

The figure, too, stood motionless. The light, reflected through a fold of the white drapery, gave a ghostly suggestion of unsubstantiality, and the sad face, with its dark, dark eyes, had no touch of color in lips or cheek to discount its unearthly aspect; but a faint, sweet smile hovered upon the mouth. It was thus that Emmeline had looked and smiled when they had met in secret by the side of the wall of the old shaft nine weary years before.

Jennet gazed, spellbound, mutely at the white vision through the silence.

"Emmeline! Come!"

The vision started slightly, and, bowing its head, glided away so swiftly that the extinction of the light was Jennet's first warning of its departure. A sudden terror swept over her; her knees gave way, and she sank to a heap on the landing. She knew no more until she opened her eyes so find the early spring dawn stealing through the narrow windows and chasing away the shadows in the passage below.

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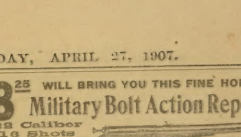

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THE UNWRITTEN LAW;

THE HAND OF RETRIBUTION.

By MAJOR ALBION F. GRANT, author of "Deuce of Diamonds," "The Stolen Millions," "The Third Woman."

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CHAPTER XI.

THE BLACK PUMA.

The Reptile of the Amazon, or La Death, as she called herself, the woman who had warned Quincy Weston in the South American cafe, the tiger-like watching a man who stood in the shadows of some of the large trees that beautified one of the public gardens of Rio de Janeiro.

She was a beautiful, dark-skinned creature, with the movements of the silent puma of her native land. The man whose life prompted with such caution, not to say suspicion, was a handsome person in the uniform of the Brazilian army and was none other than Colonel Manuel Campo.

He was evidently waiting for some one with whom he had an appointment and, suspecting this, the girl waited with the patience of her race.

At last a figure approached the officer and the two came together in the shadows of the foliage.

Then with cat-like movements the woman glided forward and became the practiced spy.

Her ears were on the alert, and for some moments she remained as motionless as a statue.

"You have the pet spread?" said Campo. The other nodded.

"And you are sure, of course, that the game will enter?"

"He cannot fail. The lure will get him. He has come from the far-away lands to die."

The watchful girl started at these words, but her vigilance did not abate one jot.

"And the Americano?" questioned the officer.

"He is ready, too."

"Good! Then we will proceed. You have been that the net will hold?"

"It has never let any one through its meshes."

"That is true," was the reply, accompanied by a little laugh. "It always holds, Tara."

The couple walked away together and the girl in the shadows remained where she was.

Presently, however, she started and sprang away.

In a few moments she was in the vicinity of the hotel where Weston was quartered.

Her eager eyes shone like diamonds. She was on the alert in every fiber and sensed the thing after which she was named—the Reptile of the Amazon.

But she grew tired of waiting. Weston did not emerge from the hotel. If he was there he did not care to show himself on the streets. Perhaps her warning had been heeded. He might have taken flight and gone back to his own land. If so, he would escape the doom that had been secured for him and there would not be another victim of the "Black Puma."

Weston, the American, had done nothing but the kind. He was not in the hotel, and if La Death had searched the right spot for him he would have been found.

In another street Weston was almost reaping his way. It was a dark way leading deep into a bad quarter of the city, but he had received word that if he would appear at a certain house at a certain hour he would learn something that would throw light upon his mission.

At last he reached a tumble-down place that was at the ill-boding end of the street and he looked about him to be sure of his bearings.

Satisfying himself, at last, that he was not wrong, he approached the low-browed door and rapped. It opened lazily on its hinges and opened a little.

Weston paused but little at the foot of the den, for it seemed nothing less, but catching sight of a wizened face beyond the door, he made bold to enter.

In another moment he found himself in a narrow, ill-smelling corridor and the door was shut behind him.

The corridor was almost dark, and but for a streak of light ahead, not broader than his finger, he would have found himself in complete gloom.

A hand touched his arm and he was led forward.

Not a word was spoken by his guide, and for a little time he was led down that forbidding hall until another door swung open and he was pushed across a threshold.

Weston was armed. He had not come on this doubtful errand without precaution, and now felt that he had with him a friend that might stand him in need.

The conductress had not deserted him, and now she stood revealed to the young American as a woman of great age, but with the deadliest eyes he had ever seen in the head of a human being.

"Well?" said Weston, looking the hag over from head to foot as he studied the little figure. "You see I am here. This is La Posa, isn't it?"

The creature nodded.

"Then I am ready to see the person who sent me the note."

"Si senor," was the reply, and Weston thought he caught the birth of a smile at the woman's lips.

"Why don't you go ahead and let me see the writer of that note?"

The old hag turned and walked across the room.

"Senor will see the lady of the house in a little while," she said over her shoulder.

She vanished through a door and Weston was alone. The light went down and darkened the room.

Instantly he caught the strange sound of a purr, then the door opened and the American retreated to the wall with his heart in his throat.

Well might he retreat to the wall and hug it with but little room in his face.

Something had entered the chamber. It was not human, yet it had the graceful movements of a woman of high degree. There were the dark eyes of a tropical beauty, the fine figure of a belle of the Amazon, but there was the long silken tail, the soft paw and the body of the dreaded puma of the forest.

A cry broke the lips of the American party.

For the moment he forgot his weapon and stood gazing at the apparition of terror and death by which he was confronted.

The great cat crouched on the floor and licked herself, but at the same time kept her eyes on her victim.

Weston recovered at last. He saw that he was trapped; he thought of La Death's warning, and a thrill went through his whole frame and he inwardly cursed his folly.

Again the door opened and a second

It was a Puma.

puma, the mate of the first and the male, bounded into the room.

He crouched alongside his mate and eyed Weston with the same baleful eyes.

He might shoot one of the beasts, but he would have the other at his throat before the smoke cleared away.

This rushed through Weston's mind with the speed of a lava current. To fight for his life against those monsters could have but one ending. He was doomed, yet he did not intend to give up without battle.

He could go no farther. The wall backed him. It seemed a wall of iron and ahead was the death of the Amazonian jungles, the terrible doom which he doubted not had overtaken others before him. Nearer and nearer crawled the mates of the forest. Weston felt that their movements were watched by some one beyond the opposite wall. There were eyes that saw all, and he must perish there without the avenging of Kendall Gray nor the thanks of Kitty.

Seconds were hours in that hell of the Brazilian city. Weston had never dreamed of such a fate, and he wondered what had become of Shang, the detective.

Suddenly he drew his revolver and cocked it.

The slight click seemed to throw new life into the creatures on the floor.

They were making ready to launch themselves upon him and he knew that the struggle was at hand.

Which one he should shoot first he did not know. Both were equally dangerous, and if he killed one—

There was that same thought again—he would have the mate at his throat.

Not a word came through the wall ahead. The silence of death reigned there.

"It is life or death," said Weston under his breath, "and most probably it is death."

Throwing up the weapon he covered the female quickly but surely, glanced along the blue barrel of the revolver and was about to press the trigger when the light failed.

In another moment he was in stygian darkness.

And in that gloom, as he knew, the pumas could see his every movement and he would be mercilessly at their mercy.

Weston dropped the weapon and thought rapidly. He edged down the wall to a corner which he could find without eyes and wedged himself into it. He did not seem to breathe now. His hands were cold and his face sweated drops that seemed to freeze on his cheeks.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOLE IN THE WALL.

There is an end to all things.

The darkness remained in the room and felt almost palpable to the victim of the Puma League.

Why did not the animals spring? What held them back? What mysterious power controlled the blood-lust of the pests of the forest? Whose hand held them in leash?

As for Weston he had to wait. There was no escape. He was cooped up with the pumas and had only to wait for that death between nail and jaw which overshadowed him.

But they did not come on. He was not dragged from his corner in the power of the monsters. He still held it, breathing again and with finger at the trigger of his weapon.

At last he thought he heard a slight noise. It came from he knew not where, the chamber was so dark. A moment later the room became flooded with a little light. He could see things again.

The pumas were gone. The room held no one but himself and he looked everywhere in hopes of seeing what had become of his executioners.

Who had called off the beasts he did not know. Their absence had told him that something had interfered for him. Perhaps he had been given a respite of life.

Weston stood for some time in his corner and recovered. He was sure that the hour of doom had only been put off. But he was still in the hands of his enemies.

All at once there came a noise from the opposite wall. A door slid to one side and the young American saw there the beady eyes of the woman who had admitted him to the place.

"How does the senor like the cats of the forest?" queried the hag.

Weston scowled and sent an inaudible curse in her direction. She grinned at him and then went on.

"The senor is a fool to come to this land. He knew that its great cats kill."

"I know that I am in the hands of monsters. I have played the fool, but I don't see why I should be taunted with my folly."

"They will come back, never fear. The cats are not far away."

"Tell me why I have been lured to this place. Into whose hands have I fallen?"

There was no answer.

"Is this the work of the Puma League?"

"It is the hand of fate, senor. It is the death that comes to all fools from the far-off land."

"But why?"

All was a question the young American could not keep back. It came to his lips unbidden.

"Does he not know?" asked the woman at the window. "Does he not know that he must escape the eyes of the Black Puma?"

"It would seem so. I was warned—"

"By whom, senor?"

There was eagerness in the tones.

"No! you would turn on the person who warned me and whose name I did not obey."

"Was it the Reptile of the Amazon?"

The American started but did not speak.

"The senor will not tell," laughed the face at the hole. "He will not tell me. What will he give for freedom?"

Weston knew that he was only being tantalized by the hag in yellow and kept his lips sealed.

"Freedom is dear to all men and the senor has a quest," continued the woman. "The eyes of the Black Puma can find out even the toughest morsel. This is the land, the home of the Black Puma—"

"And you are the mistress of their den."

"The senor would not buy his liberty. He prefers to die at the hands of the forest cats?"

Weston thought a moment.

Perhaps, after all, this hag had freedom for him. Might she not be a traitress, and was it not her voice that she called out the animals?

"What will you take for my liberty?" he asked.

"What will the senor give?"

He scowled across the room and stopped under the hole where the two eyes glittered.

"It did not come here to harm you or yours," he said. "You are not my quest. I am on another mission. It does not concern you—"

"I am old Inez."

"Well, Ines, I will give you much for freedom. I will give you all I have for it."

"How much has the senor got?"

Weston drew back. This creature was playing with him. She did not intend to betray the Black Puma. It was farthest from her thoughts; her sloe-black eyes told him another story as she talked to him of liberty.

Suddenly he thrust the muzzle of the weapon still in his hand into her face and at the same time with the other hand he seized the dark wrist that rested on the sill of the hole in the wall.

The woman drew back the length of the strange tether, but Weston clung to it like a man at the end of his string.

He pulled the revolver to his feet the tendons give; he drew the face to the brink of the hole and saw fear in the eyes of the hag.

Five, he could pull her through the hole with exertion. He knew that her body was nearly fleshless, though not very supple, for the woman had been starving and her body was like the body of a mummy, only it had life in it.

The eyes of the hag seemed to start from her head. Her hand was cold and Weston thought he caught the pulses at the wrist of a corpse. But for the snaky orbs he would have believed that the woman was dead.

"My freedom!" he laughed while he teased at the body. "I will buy it at the expense of your life. I will drag you through this hole if necessary. Your freedom comes with my hands."

He pulled anew with all his strength, forcing the attenuated face toward him.

Inez no longer cried out. Her lips were welded and her eyes were lost in the cavernous depths of their sockets.

"Come flesh or bones!" cried the young American. "I will see you dead. I will have for a companion in the lair of the pumas. You are a fiend, Inez, and deserve no less. Well, I can't say that I'd like it, either. It is your life or my liberty, and that you can purchase with a little exertion."

The figure of the hag of Rio was half-way through the hole. It could come all the way if he kept on.

Just then Weston heard a noise behind him.

What, the pumas again?

He looked for the eye in the eyes which had grown dim. They scintillated again. Inez had the woman power!

The noise was heard again. It was like the purring of some great animal, but it was not the beasts. Weston dared not look behind him. He was occupied with the hag of Rio.

Suddenly the lips of Inez parted. A little cry escaped her and the American looked over his shoulder.

The female pumas had come back!

The great cat crouched on the floor and was eyeing him while her tail made circles in the air.

"Come on! Don't be backward, Mother Ines!" laughed Weston. "I'm going to give you your money's worth! What, are you trying to cheat me and the puma?" and with a prodigious effort he jerked the hag

through the opening and dropped her on the floor at his feet.

"That's good!" chuckled the American. "You don't look very nice here, but you look the she-devil you are."

The eyes glistened and the yellow teeth came together like the serrated jaws of a steel trap.

A low growl turned Weston's attention to the crouching cat behind him.

The she-puma was in the act of throwing herself upon him!

Quick as flash he caught up the body of Ines and held it in midair for a moment.

In another instant he hurled it through space and saw it land plump in the face of the cat of the Amazon.

There was a terrible cry, half human, for the great beast rolled backward and fell against the wall with her claws striking at the singular missile that had landed against her.

Weston drew back and lifted the weapon. He waited for a shot in which he would not hit the witch. In another moment he found his chance and the room echoed to the loud report of the revolver.

The puma fell sideways and Weston sprang forward. He threw himself against the wall, it yielded and he tumbled headlong into a dark place. As he regained his feet he recoiled with a cry for a terrible sound had smote upon his ears, like the blood cry of another animal.

CHAPTER XIII.

OUT OF THE TOILS.

While Quincy Weston was wrestling with fate in lair of the Black Puma in the Brazilian capital, in another quarter of that city a man was closeted with Colonel Campo.

This person was Townley Sharp, the young detective, who had gone out with Weston and who had deceived that young man as to his real mission.

Sharp was the agent of Mrs. Burke-Deland; her money had sent him forth, and he had carried a letter from Marice De Marne to the Brazilian officer.

Twirling his dense mustache, Manuel Campo had listened to Sharp's account of the case of the Othello Gardens, and had expressed his opinion that they would entrap Weston and block his game.

"By this time," said the colonel, "our man is in the toils. He knows that the teeth of the puma are sharp."

"You have caged him then?"

"Aye, we have him in the net bf death!" Campo looked at his watch. "The hour of doom has passed. Would you come, senor, and see the work of the cats?"

Sharp rose with eagerness and followed Campo from the room.

They went down a number of dark streets, and at last the officer let them into a forbidding looking house and closed the door.

"This isn't a very nice place," he said, with a twist of his neck as he glanced at his companion. "In fact it is one of the ugliest places in the capital. But," with a shrug of his broad shoulders, "it quite answers our purpose."

Thereupon the officer called a name to which he did not get any response and, a little puzzled at this, he went on:

"Old Ines is usually on guard," he said. "She must be somewhere."

Half a minute later he opened another door and looked into a half lighted chamber.

An oath in Spanish fell from his lips.

"Carramba! what is this? He should be here!"

"What is that over there in the corner?" queried Sharp. "Seems to me it has the shape of a human figure——"

Campo bounded across the room and stooped over the object that was huddled in one corner.

"By my soul! it is Ines!" Sharp heard him cry. "'Tis the porteress of the den! And the prey has escaped!"

"Not Weston?"

The old hag was breathing and Campo carried her from the place into another room.

"The cats!" he cried. "Where are the cats?"

Throwing the body of Ines upon a couch, he ran back with Sharp at his heels and bounded across the scene of the terrible combat with the pumas.

In the dark place beyond the battle chamber he stumbled over something soft and then saw the body of the female animal.

"She is dead," he groaned. "The American wretch has killed her!"

Sharp bent forward and took a long breath.

Never before had he seen such a beautiful yet vicious looking beast.

"She was strong enough to master a dozen men," he said.

"So she does, but the American was too much for her."

They went back to old Ines.

The hag for this time was sitting up with staring eyes and ugly mien.

"Where is the devil from the North?" she gasped, as her deep eyes flashed.

"You should know," responded Campo. "I left you here to do the deed."

"But he pulled me through the hole and I heard not a speck of flesh on my bones. It was terrible, and then he went out the door and over the puma——"

"And got away?"

"What, haven't you found him?"

"No, he escaped!"

"But you can trap him and you will hand him over to me and not to the puma?"

"We will see," said the officer. "Come, sir," to Sharp. "The rascal is still in the city and there are other traps."

Yes, the game was out of the trap.

Back at his hotel Weston was recalling with many a shudder his adventures in the lair of the Black Puma.

All at once he happened to see his mail on the table and sprang to read it.

Among the lot was a letter which he opened with eagerness and began to devour its contents.

"So they are going to clear him?" he ejaculated. "It is the deceiving plan of the 'unwritten law' and it is taking hold of the people."

Among the papers just from home Weston read the story of the latest phases of the "Hector Knight Case," how the best counsel had been secured, how Marice De Marne was receiving the sympathy of all classes, and how the drift was toward the slayer, while Gray was held up to all as a wicked man who had persecuted Knight and her lover had silenced him with a bullet.

As he read, his cheeks reddened with indignation and his breath came and went in little gasps.

"They do not know the truth," said he, as he laid the last paper down. "They think this girl an angel, yet they shall some day be undeceived and my poor friend shall be vindicated!"

He felt that the Puma League would not let him rest in undisturbed repose.

He had escaped one danger and he would have to be on his guard to keep out of the thousand and one traps they would set for him.

The republic of the Amazon had not lied; her warning was true, and if he had but listened——

But why shed tears after the pitcher was broken? He had learned a lesson which would stand him in need in the future, and he would have to fight out the battle alone.

When next he saw Kitty he told her the story of his perils.

"I am not surprised," said Gray's love. "The Black Puma is a terror in this land.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed, "it is gone."

But how came it to know that you are here to vindicate Kendall?"

"There is a traitor somewhere," answered Weston. "And why not a letter or a cablegram from Marice De Marne herself?"

"If she is Helen O'Zaris she will fight for her secret."

"And Helen O'Zaris she is. Unmask her in court and she will feel all sympathy fall from her as garments over something soft and then saw the body of the female animal.

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Among the lot was a letter which he opened with eagerness and began to devour its contents.

"So they are going to clear him?" he ejaculated. "It is the deceiving plan of the 'unwritten law' and it is taking hold of the people."

Among the papers just from home Weston read the story of the latest phases of the "Hector Knight Case," how the best counsel had been secured, how Marice De Marne was receiving the sympathy of all classes, and how the drift was toward the slayer, while Gray was held up to all as a wicked man who had persecuted Knight and her lover had silenced him with a bullet.

As he read, his cheeks reddened with indignation and his breath came and went in little gasps.

"They do not know the truth," said he, as he laid the last paper down. "They think this girl an angel, yet they shall some day be undeceived and my poor friend shall be vindicated!"

He felt that the Puma League would not let him rest in undisturbed repose.

He had escaped one danger and he would have to be on his guard to keep out of the thousand and one traps they would set for him.

The republic of the Amazon had not lied; her warning was true, and if he had but listened——

But why shed tears after the pitcher was broken? He had learned a lesson which would stand him in need in the future, and he would have to fight out the battle alone.

When next he saw Kitty he told her the story of his perils.

"I am not surprised," said Gray's love. "The Black Puma is a terror in this land. Yet Noble Knight had not given up his desire to look deeper into Marice's past. The information he had obtained through his private detective had served as an incentive to learn more, and he felt that something had happened on a certain night in the den of Padouche, the evil spirit of the Pendleton.

Marice was not barred from the circles of good society. Mrs. Burke-Deland saw to it that she had the same privileges that she enjoyed among the "400," and she kept Marice in the limelight constantly.

Some weeks after the crime of the Othello Gardens Marice was startled to be accosted by a man on the street.

She had just alighted from the Deland carriage and was about to enter a fashionable milliner's.

The man was commonplace looking, a little dark of skin like a South American, but Marice did not notice this at first.

"You are Miss De Marne?" said the man as he came closer.

"I am. But I am at a loss to know who addresses me."

"True. But you know the deeps of the pumas eyes!"

Every vestige of color left Marice's face and she seemed to gasp.

"I do not want to frighten you, but you will see me."

"Where? When?"

"Tonight at nine; at your home."

"No, not there!" cried the girl. Mrs. Deland——"

Mrs. Deland will not be at home tonight."

"I know nothing of her going away."

"She will not disturb us," said the man deliberately. "You will be there."

That was all. The man was off like a flash. Marice completed her errand and went back.

Mrs. Deland told her upon her return that she would pass the evening with her sister on the next avenue, therefore Marice could have the house to herself.

How eagerly Marice De Marne waited for the hour set by the dark-skinned man!

Alone in the room of her benefactor with her heart beating wildly she watched the hands of the clock and counted the minutes it ticked off.

At precisely nine the bell tingled.

The expectant girl answered it in person.

She led the man into the brilliantly lighted parlor and then stunned him long and closely, looking him over as if calling up some long vanished past.

"I am here from the head of the Black Puma," said the man, breaking the little silence that was becoming on Marice's part embarrassing.

"From—the—Black Puma?"

"Yes, Marice!"

Marice threw a quick glance toward the door.

"You must excuse me," she said. "I know nothing about the Black Puma——"

"Marice!" was the interruption. "It will not do, though you are expected to be cautious in this land. I know by what name you are surrounded just now. And caution is a good thing. We have failed."

The cheeks of the girl in the limelight went white.

"We have failed and not on our account. That man is a devil."

"What man?"

"The man who came down there after the affair of the Gardens."

"And you failed and you have failed?"

"Yes, and he may be on his way North."

It seemed that Marice would sink through the chair she occupied.

"I have come to prepare you for the worst," he went on. "If he comes back with what he went after——"

"He will be baffled right here!" cried the girl. "We are now ready to meet him."

"With the mark on your shoulder?"

A look of terrible, diabolical triumph, a look of triumph, was the answer the dark man got.

"He would find nothing were he to look," said she.

"Nothing?"

"I have told you."

"But——"

"It is gone!"

"The puma's head?"

"Yes."

A look of incredulity came into the man's eyes and he drew back a pace.

"Impossible," said he. "You cannot rid yourself of the sign of the Black Puma."

"I have done so."

In another moment the white drapery that covered Marice's alabaster shoulder fell off in soft folds and the man with the dark little eyes craned his neck forward.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed. "It is gone, but, woman, you have broken the law of the Puma."

"How?"

"That was a life mark. When you lose it, you pass from the protection of the Order."

"I did not understand it so."

"But you took the oath?"

"How can I forget that?"

"And when you lose that mark you become the enemy of the Order."

"But the reason!" cried the fair girl. "You do not know. Everything is at stake, my future, my happiness, my future husband's life, and more—my honor."

The man laughed a cruel, bitter laugh that seemed to make his little eyes dance like devilishes.

"The honor of Helen O'Zaris!" he flashed. "The honor of the woman caught in the toils of crime in South America and who, but for the Black Puma, would be living in a cell under ground."

"Hush!" and the girl threw up her jeweled hands. "Are you man or devil?"

"Both, sister," he replied. "You are still Helen O'Zaris, the opera singer. You are still the woman who led the young Vemosa——"

"I did that at the command of the Puma," cried Marice, with hands at her ears. "Now I have if you belong to the Order."

"Since you have discarded the mark and thus broken your vows you must fight your own battle. You must meet the man the man who has escaped the jaws of the cats of the Gardens."

Marice De Marne rose and tottered across the room, watched like a tiger by the man who had come to her home with the dire sight of her.

"You must help me. I will go back to the mark when all is over," she exclaimed, halting before the man. "I have so much at stake. If he comes back with his proof I can face him and there will be no telling what may be the end. Can't you see, man?"

The dark-faced man only grinned.

"It was a fatal stroke, sure enough," said he. "I wouldn't have thought of it. You are a shrewd woman."

"One has to be when everything is at stake. I am on the winning side now. We have the people with us. We have the lawyers on the bar; will not he and that is a power. Hutton Strong, his main lawyer, has promised to have him acquitted."

"But why—tell me—why did he shoot Kendall Gray?"

"He was my evil genius. He came North to persecute me. He was my persecutor, my tormentor."

"And for that he died?"

"Yes, it was justice. They are all saying that now. You can read that from Maine to California."

"And that will clear Hector Knight?"

"Certainly."

The little man was silent for a minute.

"I am sorry," he remarked as he suddenly rose. "If this Yankee, Quincy Weston, comes back to this city, all the lawyers

(Continued on page eleven.)

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The fish bar will soon be on deck again.

It's a good thing not to be a "good thing."

Many a man says "How do you do?" just before doing you.

Nothing is more unsatisfactory than vanity—in others.

Lots of lazy men would kick if they were compelled to do nothing.

It takes two to make a match—and a divorce judge to ignite it.

Some people are too conscientious to preach their practice.

A word to the wise may be sufficient—but it depends on the word.

Trying to live up to his good reputation has kept many a man poor.

Put yourself in your neighbor's place and you would stop abusing him.

Never use hard words—especially if you are unable to pronounce them.

Most of the good things in life come to those who wait on themselves.

And the early bird sometimes gets it when the girl gets the extension.

Speaker adds to the popularity of Roosevelt every time he opens his mouth.

You may have observed that a good practical joke is always on the other fellow.

Advocates of home industries are not always industrious when they are at home.

And many a man acquires the upper hand by dealing it from the bottom of the deck.

Many a dairyman's idea of pure milk is the kind from which all cream has been removed.

It's a man has nothing to do and nowhere to go he can afford to sit down and argue with a woman.

Don't sit around and wait for opportunity to knock at your door. Go and knock on the door of opportunity.

Thaw discovered that the gilding supplied by his eloquent attorney would not stand the Jerome acid test.

Food mothers who hope to retain the confidence of their sons should get a book and learn the baseball dope.

A woman invariably tells a small boy to hurry back when she sends him on an errand—but what's the use?

Could Thaw and his wife stand a new trial when the public had grown so indifferent that their pictures were published only every other day?

Considering the fact that he talks so much President Roosevelt should please his enemies, but he doesn't. This must be on account of what he says.

HOUSE OF THE MIDNIGHT SOUND.

By J. BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS.

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE FLASH OF LIGHT.

For a brief space there was silence in the lawyer's office.

Then Judge Havens exploded. "Mr. Zellers, do you mean to tell us that you have discovered who is the murderer of Washington Talbot?"

"I do."

"After his identity has remained an impenetrable mystery for forty years?"

"Exactly so."

"Mr. Zellers," said the judge in a low voice, bending forward and looking intently into the detective's gray eyes, "who is it—"

"You are a Kentuckian?" asked Keeneyes.

"Sir, I am—"

"And you have never suspected who killed Washington Talbot?"

"Why should the fact that I am a Kentuckian—"

"Gentlemen," said Keeneyes rising, "I would rather not go further into that at present."

"I am not care to incriminate people until I can produce positive proofs.

"If I am premature, it will precipitate failure.

"I ask you to come to the haunted house tonight at midnight and wait with me there one hour.

"When the town clock strikes one I will show you the murderer.

"And I will show him to you so conclusively that there will remain at will not think of denying that he is the murderer.

"You will admit that forty years long clews gather dusty.

"It is important to place the criminal in such a position that he will readily confess what it might be difficult to prove.

"Therefore come at twelve tonight. And in the meantime, good-by, for I have much to do."

Keeneyes took his departure.

His statement that he had much to do had been no polite social fiction.

And yet his work puzzled Jansen Moore.

That young man had returned his room at the hotel, but he no longer shunned the detective; in fact, the detective needed his aid.

The detective's first care was to put a strong lock on the door.

"What is that for?" asked Jansen Moore when Keeneyes nodded his satisfaction over the security of the iron plate.

"That," said Keeneyes succinctly, "is to lock."

Sometimes Jansen Moore found Keeneyes rather trying, but a recollection of the services always preserved him from an outbreak of revolt.

Having left the cellar door unlocked, Keeneyes next set to work to collect old iron.

He hied a spring wagon and with Jansen Moore drove about Kenilworth picking up old worn-out stoves. Sometimes he got them for nothing; sometimes he paid a small price. In either case he was regarded with much curiosity by the householders.

At last he had a goodly heap of rusted iron in his front yard.

The wagon was returned to its owner.

"Now," said Keeneyes, "all this iron is to be carried into the cellar. Will you kindly lend a hand, Moore?"

When the old stoves had been carried down to the cellar, the two men were very hard hungry. Keeneyes dismissed them to a dinner at Jansen Moore's hotel, but he did not dine there. He ordered something in the restaurant. The string beans tasted of the sour rags soaked in rusing water and the ice cream resembled frozen batter. Keeneyes stuck his fork into the beefsteak, pulled it out with disgust and threw it with sadness. "This seems to call for a beef bouquet."

"Or inquest?" Jansen Moore ventured.

"No, sir," said Keeneyes, "there is no doubt as to what he died of; a simple case of old age, my dear fellow."

"The landlord, at least," said Moore, "is not so easily autopsied."

"Also!" said Keeneyes, shaking his head, "the poor chicken scarcely dead yet."

Keeneyes insisted on paying the bill, and as he laid his dollar on the table before the wicker window he said, "Madam, your prices be heavy, and I have a biscuit in my stomach that matches it."

The lady with the long face asked sharply, "Didn't the dinner suit you?"

"Ah," said Keeneyes, lifting his hat, "you think ill of me."

Once more back in the desolate house, Keeneyes set to work to arrange a complicated piece of machinery out of his rusty stoves and iron weights. Under his direction Jansen Moore brought from the haunted bed chamber the wood framework under which the graphophone had been hidden.

Other heavy beams were dragged down to the cellar.

Coatless and vestless, the perspiring men worked with iron, lumber and ropes.

At last the thing was done, much to Jansen Moore's mystification.

A shapeless mass of battered iron and discernable parts of stoves was poised in the air, supported by the wooden uprights and cross-pieces.

Keeneyes rubbed his hands with satisfaction.

"But what is it all about?" Moore ventured.

"My dear boy," said the detective patronizingly, "don't you see that we have suspended a mass of immense weight in midair?"

"Of course, I see that."

"And that it is hanging directly over the mouth of the drainpipe?"

"Yes, if it fell it would certainly stop up the drain."

Keeneyes chuckled. "Moore, you are right. It would. Now, you must help me on this rope. Watch me. See: I tie it to this beam. Observe the beam. Do you note?"

"Note what?"

"Note what? Why, my dear boy, note that if this beam were to give way, the whole pile of iron would come crashing down upon the mouth of the drainpipe."

"But that beam won't fall."

"Wouldn't it if I pulled this rope?"

"Why, of course, if I pulled the rope it would."

"Well, that is exactly what I want you to do this night."

"Pull the rope?"

"Exactly. Thank you, Moore, I may not have another chance to explain this to you, for there is much more to do. So give me your utmost attention. Are you listening?"

"Of course, I am," said Moore impatiently.

"Of course, you are, hey? Well, well, now if I am not here tonight I will be through you. I foresee that. Listen, then, to the whole murderous plot of Washington Talbot to come into this cellar tonight. I will ask you to lie in wait in the drainpipe, which I understand, I will assign Mr. Allen the duty of locking the cellar door. Judge Havens will follow the murderer into this cellar. I will shout 'Gludgers,' you will pull the rope. You understand? The murderer will be caught in a trap. The door will be locked behind him. He must then prevent his escape by going through the drainpipe to the exit. You see? We will seize and overpower him."

"But," said Moore, "why do you say 'gludgers' instead of 'burglars'?"

Keeneyes rubbed his hands with delight. "Moore, you are very young and retained his room at the hotel, but he no longer shunned the detective; in fact, the detective needed his aid.

"

the instant you hear that midnight sound, cry 'Gludgers!'"

"Very well," said Moore, who did not like to be treated like a little boy. Keeneyes left the room and Moore closed the door after him.

Then he took up his post on the cot and waited.

As from a remote distance he presently heard the graphophone at work with its hollow thump—thump—thump.

The moments dragged by.

Suddenly there came the sound of mystery, the sound that hitherto had come only at midnight. It fell soft and muffled under or beside the washstand.

Jansen Moore, who had been listlessly following the faint beating upon the staircase, was so startled that his heart stood still.

Again came the mysterious sound as of an invisible presence in the room.

Jansen Moore cried, "I hear it, Mr. Zellers!" Then he bethought him, and shouted, "Gludgers!"

The beating on the staircase ceased.

Keeneyes appeared at the door. "I will ask you to kindly step this way," he said politely. He no longer expected anything from his friend but a rudimental observe. He resolved to honor this willingness and no longer chide his friend for the absence of ability.

"Moore," he said gently, when he had conducted the half dead the flight of stairs, "will you have the goodness to hold this graphophone to your ear a moment? And the detective held the instrument against the inside wall, about four feet above the floor. It is rather a strain, and it will be somewhat awkward, but if you would only object to so much, I hope you may comply with this request."

"Of course," said the young man. "I will do anything to help."

"Oh, thank you," said Keeneyes dryly.

Then he closed the door, went back into the bedroom, having first touched the spring. He closed the door after him.

Jansen Moore held the graphophone tightly against the wall till the entire record was played out.

Then Keeneyes appeared at the head of the stairs. His face wore an expression of elation.

"Yes," he said, "we are both able to reproduce the phenomenon at will. It is a little sharper than the original and it is not so prolonged, but it is a very successful imitation, very successful indeed. A thousand thanks, my dear fellow."

"Still," said Moore, "although we can make the mysterious sound, it does not tell us who made it, or why it was made."

"Oh, I already know that. But I did not know exactly where the sound was made or the instrument. Now we know that it is always produced half-way up the stairs on which Mr. Bellamy fell and was injured, and about four feet above the step. In a word, what we have been hearing is the fatal drop that Washington Talbot fell to his death forty years ago."

Moore stared incredulously.

"My dear Mr. Zellers," he expostulated, "you are superstitious."

Keeneyes replied, "I do not think it, Moore. This is a scientific demonstration.

"Let us suppose that I am mistaken. Do you not think that for every heart in the world there is some other heart, could it be found? Do you not think that for every desire, perhaps I should qualify my term and say for every natural desire, there is somewhere, a natural means for its fulfillment? You agree with me, I am sure. Let us then proceed from the mental to the material world. Every material object when struck gives forth a sound, audibly or inaudibly from the viewpoint of mortal ears. Now, my dear fellow, I am sure that every object has a characteristic tone in some other object, if brought into proper relationship. To take a simple example—one that you understand, my dear friend—you know that if you strike the coal bucket with the poker that a vibration will at once respond from an open piano.

"But to return this matter into its recesses, have you not at times, I might say oftentimes, struck an object, or, let us say, merely rested upon a particular plank in the floor and been answered by the inarticulate cry of some invisible object, say a vase, or picture frame, or even the quiver of a bracelet?

"It is a reasonable inference, therefore, that every material object may be made to give forth a vibration or sound by committing another object, provided, of course, that its soul's partner, so to speak, is in exactly the right spot."

"This is vague," remarked Jansen Moore.

"Then I will make it concrete," said Keeneyes with much good-nature. "As soon as I heard the midnight sound, or at least, the second time I heard it, I knew it could not be produced by any presence in the bedroom. How then came it into the room? Clearly, that particular plank under the washstand was made to give out an echo whenever its soul's partner, so to speak, was smitten. Where was that intimate plank of its echoing fibre? I investigated. It was in vain. Suddenly it occurred to me that the staircase where the murder had been committed contained the complement of that echoing plank. By means of the graphophone it could be elucidated. And we have elucidated it."

"What you say is ingenuous," said Moore, "but not convincing."

"Very well," said Keeneyes, "perhaps you can account for the midnight sound? What logic can I possibly refute."

"But, Mr. Zellers," said Moore emphatically, "if all the logic in the world were heaped and piled to prove a point, I could not be convinced that a sound made forty years ago will manifest exactly at one o'clock every night in a deserted house."

Keeneyes burst out laughing. "My dear Moore," he cried, "my dear fellow, let us go to the cab, and let us see that we will be handed out a better meal than was served to us at high noon!"

CHAPTER XV.

ONCE MORE, THE MIDNIGHT SOUND.

At twelve o'clock, midnight, Keeneyes stood at the iron gate of the "Washington Talbot property," as the old settlers still called Judge Havens' premises.

Jansen Moore was waiting at the front door.

Almost punctually to the moment two men came up the sidewalk and paused at the gate; they were Judge Havens and his friend Jack Allen.

"Come in, gentlemen," said Keeneyes in a low voice. "Please make as little noise as possible. You have asked me who murdered Washington Talbot forty years ago, sir. I will presently show you. Are you both armed?"

"I am," said the judge.

"I do not know that force will be called for, but perhaps well enough. You, sir?" to Allen.

"Yes," said Jack Allen. "I guess I ought to have as well enough—for I slept there many times!"

"And the midnight sound always came from where your washstand is placed."

"Yes, it did."

"Then excuse me just a moment, gentlemen," said Keeneyes; "Moore, do the civilities till I come back, will you?"

Keeneyes opened the door and closed behind him. The stairway was lighted by Jansen Moore's lamp. He at once ascended, carried his graphophone to the spot of vibration above the staircase and pressed it against the wall. Then, at only one hammer-stroke had been given forth he checked the machine and made a memorandum on the hall door. The bedroom door opened and Judge Havens looked out.

"Did you hear the mysterious midnight sound?" called Keeneyes.

"I did," said the judge in an eager affirmative.

"I made it," said Keeneyes serenely. "Anybody can make it if he only knows how, hey, Moore?"

"That's all," Moore nodded. Keeneyes then went into the same elaborate explanation which he had delivered to Jansen Moore.

"That's all well enough," said Jack Allen, "but the grant thing that somebody produces the sound by knocking on the wall over the mysterious step, the question is, how does it?"

"Yes, sir," said the judge, pulling his goatee; "it isn't a consideration of whether or not you or I can make that sound, but who pulled the strings, that is it."

"Easily answered," said Keeneyes; "the man who murdered Washington Talbot, when he committed the deed."

"Then again," said Allen argumentatively, "why should he?"

"Easily explained," said Keeneyes; "for forty years he has brooded over his crime. During that time, I am sure, he has taken complete possession of him, particularly the part of it relating to the object, say a vase, or to this house and to the fatal spot where the deed was committed.

"He pulled the strings, just as it was forty years ago at the commission of the deed, and he being in possession, was overcome by self-magnetism. It is a case of autohypnosis.

"He comes here just as he came forty years ago.

"He lives over that awful night.

"He creeps to the staircase where to all intents and purposes Washington Talbot is lying dead at the bottom.

"This barefooted murderer slips up the stairs. He is following Washington Talbot up, up, up.

"Now he is half-way up the flight. He will pass no longer. Talbot might escape.

"Suddenly the murderer deals Talbot a blow over the head. He is a matter of fact, there is no flesh-and-blood head of Washington Talbot to receive the blow, only a ghostly thought-head through which the blow passes as through air.

"The body falls upon the wooden wall. That produces the midnight sound. The murderer the washstand responds to the thud upon its soul's partner, so to speak, unwisely, that plank of answering fibre in the staircase wall.

"Then what does our murderer do? Perhaps the sound of the blow wakes him up. In that case he will flee with noiseless feet. If he is not awakened he will act as he did forty years ago. How that was I do not know, though I can imagine. No matter. The mystery of the midnight sound is explained."

"By no means!" he cried Jack Allen. "How could a man get into this house when every door and window was made fast? Never at morning or night, during our occupancy of this house, was there ever the least sign of any tampering of the locks."

"Locks!" echoed Keeneyes. "Pooh!"

"Well," retorted Allen argumentatively, "if no locks were altered, how could a material, flesh-and-blood murderer get into this house?"

"Just as he got into it forty years ago, namely, through the cellar."

Judge Havens spoke up. "The cellar window is not large enough to admit the passage of a man's body, besides it is boarded up."

"The window? Nonsense! Our murderer came in through the drainpipe."

"Ah! you mean through the drainpipe!" "Why, of course I mean the drainpipe. Where else? Excuse me an moment, gentlemen, while I turn off all the electric lights for the time drawn from for our murderer to come."

Presently the house was in absolute dark, nass nuss for the bedroom in which the coal-oil lamp burned, turned down low.

"Now," said Keeneyes, "I may give me your earnest attention while I outline our immediate course of action.

"It is now half-past twelve. In about fifteen minutes, I judge, our interesting murderer will emerge from the drainpipe into the dark cellar.

"He will creep upstairs to the fatal spot on the staircase.

"Moore and I have built a trap over the mouth of the drainpipe.

"As soon as the murderer is safely out of the cellar, Moore will descend. To creep into the cellar, wiggle yourself down into that drainpipe, drawing the end of the trap rope with you. Moore will then pull you into the house. Gludgers! Then you will pull the rope, and I will come. The name of Gludgers will arouse from the drainpipe into the dark cellar.

"So

BLOOD-CLEANING TIME

Easily Prepared Mixture Is Said to Be Splendid.

To make a splendid Blood Medicine, which every one should take at this time of the year, mix: Fluid Extract Dandelion one-half ounce, Compound Kargon one ounce, Compound Syrup Sarsaparilla three ounces. Shake well in a bottle and take in tea-spoonful doses after meals and at bedtime.

A well-known local druggist states that these are harmless ingredients, which any pharmacy can supply at nominal cost.

This simple mixture, though easily prepared, is said to strengthen the kidneys, forcing them to filter and strain from the blood all impure waste matter and acids which cause Rheumatism, Nervousness, Skin Eruptions, Sores, Boils and Pimples and other effects of Unclean Blood.

Now is the time to rid the system of disease and build up the full blood count of 95 per cent red corpuscles, which means perfect health.

Mix this yourself.

Rural Logic.

"Say, Mandy," queried Mr. Hayrix, "whose picter be that on th' first page uv De Weekly Banzo?"

"That air be a picter uv th' President, Hiram," answered Mrs. Hi.

"Gosh, all hemlock!" exclaimed the old man excitedly. "Hes he bin an' got cured uv somethin', too?"

Already Holds Office.

When she had finished her remarks relative to something he had done that did not meet her approval, he spoke.

"I don't see why you should want woman suffrage," he said. "You already hold office."

"What office?" she demanded.

"Speaker of the house," he replied.

Piscatorial.

An angler was asked up in Mich.
As to when he would go out to fish.
An inscrutable smile
Decked his face a short while;
Then he said, "I shall go when I wish."

An Oil Without Odor.

We know that it will interest our readers to learn that the J. Stevens Arms & Tool Co., of Chicopee Falls, Mass., have perfected a new oil which is known as "Stevens Odorless Gun Oil." The name is interesting when we know the unwholesome odor that gun oils have had in the past. This oil is a lubricant, rust preventive, polishing and a cleaning compound. It is not only adaptable to firearms, but also to bicycles, sewing machines and all mechanism requiring a high grade oil.

CURE FOR LIQUOR AND TOBACCO.

The Kansas Anti-Liquor Society is mailing free a recipe for the cure of the liquor habit. It can be given secretly in food. Also one for the tobacco habit that can be given secretly. The only request they make is that you do not sell recipes, but give recipes to friends." Address Kansas Anti-Liquor Society, 15 Gray Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

Exact Analysis.

Asbitt—Why do you consider that goat an impressive looking animal?

Nowitt—Because he has such a striking forehead.

How It Happened.

Green—I was the victim of a lynching party in Arizona once.

Brown—You don't say?

Green—Fact. I married the widow of a man who was strung up for horse stealing.

Proof Positive.

Myer—What reason have you for considering Upson flighty?

Gyer—He has a new scheme for navigating the air.

What She Wanted.

"I want something for my husband that will surprise him—that will take his breath away."

"Fourth floor to the right for choker collars."

AGENTS WANTED

Nearly all the readers of THE LEDGER will find these advertisements of interest to them. There will be found among them some excellent chances of making money by selling goods to friends, neighbors and others. Those seeking such an opportunity either as a regular or temporary occupation, should write the advertisers whose offers follow:

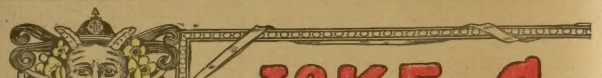
AGENTS wanted to diagnose by sending for our Free Book on the eye, it will tell you all about it. A book now that pays you from $75.00 to $150.00 per month without a failure; the optical profession will not be overcrowded for years to come; no time necessary to work for some one—you are your own boss; agent should have the VANDERBILT BOOK. It costs you nothing to write for it. Address at once for full particulars and free trial offer. JACKSONIAN OPTICAL COLLEGE, Dept. F, JACKSON, MICHIGAN

MAKE MONEY EASY

Agents wanted in every county to sell the popular Novelty Knife with name, address, photo, lodge or fac. on handle. Send stamp for catalogue.

AGENTS EARN $75 to $300 A MONTH. (We show you how.)

Big specialties in universal demand in every country. Write quick for our liberal money making special offer to agents. One new sells 5 others. Experience unnecessary. Address at once, NOVELTY CUTLERY CO., 2-3 BAR STREET, CANTON, O.



When the Truth Comes Out.

"Do you know," remarked Mrs. Newed, "I can't believe a word my husband says any more."

"That's too bad," rejoined Mrs. Oldwed. "Doesn't he ever talk in his sleep?"

Not a Prize Beauty.

Newed—Yes, I got my wife through a matrimonial agency. We were engaged before we met.

Oldham—That is quite evident. But couldn't you buy her off after the meeting?

Papa—I never told lies when I was a boy, Willie.
Willie—When did you begin, papa?

Sure Sign.

"I declare, Gladys is getting prettier every day."

"You only think that because every time she comes out she has uglier bulldog."

Unkind.

Clarence—When I saw how big a fish I had hooked, I tell you I caught my breath!

Miss Cunning—You had some bait for that along, too, had you?

Successful Actor (disapprovingly)—My dear fellow, surely that's a very short coat you are wearing?

The Seedy One—What's the odds? It'll be long enough before I get another.

IN A SHADOW

Inveterate Tea Drinker Feared Paralysis.

Steady use of either tea or coffee often produces alarming symptoms as the poison (caffeine) contained in these beverages acts with more potency in some persons than in others.

"I was never a coffee drinker," writes an Ill. woman, "but a tea drinker. I was very nervous, had frequent spells of sick headache and heart trouble, and was subject at times to severe attacks of bilious colic.

"No end of sleepless nights—would have spells at night when my right side would get numb and tingle like a thousand needles were pricking my flesh. At times I could hardly put my tongue out of my mouth and my right eye and ear were affected.

"The doctors told me I was liable to become paralyzed at any time, so I was in constant dread. I took medicine of various doctors and no end of patent medicine—all to no good.

"The doctors told me to quit using tea, but I thought I could not live without it—that it was my only stay. I had been a tea drinker for twenty-five years; was under the doctor's care for fifteen.

"About six months ago I finally quit tea and commenced to drink Postum.

"I have never had one spell of sick-headache since and only one light attack of bilious colic. Have quit having those numb spells at night, sleep well and my heart is getting stronger all the time. Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Satisfactory.

The stern but wealthy parent met the young man at the front door.

"Here," he growled, "is where I give your attention to my daughter a check."

"All right, old man," replied the youth calmly. "Make the check for $1,000 and it will be perfectly satisfactory to me."

My Grocer.

He claims his goods are all first class—
No better have I eaten.
I told him that I'd found, alas,
His eggs could not be beaten!

Just a Jiagle.

Dogs seldom wear their own pants.
Which fact lays them open to scorn.
No nephew or niece for ants.
And a cow never blows her own horn.

Alas, Alas!

I've an utter contempt for riches, mind.
For dollars and bonds are deeds.
But, alas, my contempt is not the kind
Familiarity breeds!

A Dainty Little Maid.

Every one ought to have her. She is dressed in pretty colors and changes the color of her skirt herself when it is going to rain. She indicates when it is wise to take an umbrella or when you can do without. She is the simplest and best of barometers. She is an ornament, a good seller and agents, a pretty gift, a good business souvenir and useful to any one. She or one of her sisters comes postpaid with full directions for only 10 cents. W. P. Randolph & Co., 78 Dearborn St., Chicago.

Ways That Are Dark.

"Give me a kiss?" he begged.

"No," she protested. "I can't see it in that light."

Being a resourceful young man, he turned down the light and got busy.

As to Skeletons.

His Wife—They say that the family next door have a skeleton in their closet.

Her Husband—Well, that is better than letting it run around loose.

The Probable Reason.

"I wonder why that Miss Wrinkles always wears a veil?"

"Guess she has not the face to go without it."

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every dark spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and roundness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

Ways That Are Dark.

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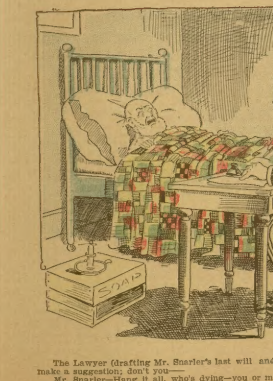

The Lawyer (drafting Mr. Snarler's last will and testament)—Oh, but if I may make a suggestion, don't you—

Mr. Snarler—Hang it all, who's dying—you or me, eh?

Merely a Theory.

"Of course, I don't know," began the sarcastic boarder, "but it strikes me this chicken—"

"Now, what's the matter with the chicken?" interrupted the landlady.

"Oh, nothing," answered the s. b, "only it is evidently the offspring of a hard-boiled egg.

His Point of View

Patient (who had met with an accident)—Is it a bad fracture, Doctor?

Doctor (a surgical enthusiast)—Bad? Why it's beautiful, sir, beautiful! The bone is broken in no fewer than thirteen places!

Encouraging Her.

Stationer—What do you do with all the lead pencils you buy, Mr. Smith? You average about three a day.

Mr. Smith—Oh, that's all right. My wife is taking whittling lessons.

Tommy's Idea of It.

W'en my pop talks of Standard Oil
It makes my heart beat faster,
Fur fear I'll git some, 'cause I know
The standard oil is castor.

The Reason.

Miss Smith—Why do some people insist on talking about their neighbors?

Miss Quick—Because they take it for granted that their neighbors are talking about them and want to make sure of getting even.

Be Genial

That he who laughs last laughs best
We're often told, but I'm
Quite sure it's best to laugh and jest
First, last and all the time.

Terrible Fate.

"Yes, Katharine, the young man I have accepted has sandy hair."

"Indeed!"

"And when he is angry you should just hear him grit his teeth."

"My!"

"And, above all, he has plenty of dust."

"Gracious! I don't think I would care for that kind of a husband. Why, it it rained on him he might turn into a mud pie."

Little Too Much.

Magistrate—What's the charge against this man, officer?

Policeman—Cresting a disturbance, your honor.

Magistrate—He created a disturbance on your best hat night, did he?

Policeman—Sure he did. He made so much noise he woke me up.

What He Wanted.

Mr. Hayrix (in swell restaurant)—Kin I git some dinner here, mister?

Waiter—Certaintly, sir. Will you have table d'hote or a la carte?

Mr. Hayrix—Well, yew may gimme a leetle of both—an' be shore an' put plenty uv gravy on it.

Caught in a Misstatement.

Homely Lecturer—Women, my friends, are invariably hard to please.

Voice (in the audience)—One moment, please. Are you married?

Homely Lecturer (irritably)—Yes, sir, I am.

Voice—Is your wife happy?

Lecturer (proudly and indignantly)—Yes, sir, she is.

Voice—Then, sir, you're a liar.

NOT IN HIS LINE.

"You shoot him, Billy. I only shoot rabbits."

She—What do you think of his execution?

He—I'm in favor of it.

Still a Rounder.

Mrs. A—You should, indeed, be pleased that you have an all-around good fellow for a husband.

Mrs. Z—Hardly. Why, he is never at home.

Mrs. Z—Where is he?

Mrs. Z—Why, "all around."

Good Tip.

"Do you think I can reach the heart of the haughty beauty?" sighed the sentimental youth with the guitar under his arm.

"Better try tunneling, old man," advised his friend.

"Tunneling?"

"Yes, I heard her say you were a great bore."

Final Sweep.

Merchant—Yes, we are in need of a janitor. Where were you employed last?

Applicant—In a bank, sir.

Merchant—Did you clean it out?

Applicant—No, sir. The cashier did that.

Pertinent Query.

"There are but seven real jokes in the world, you know," remarked the humorist.

"How is it," queried the man behind the blue pencil, "that you never happened upon any of them?"

AGENTS WANTED

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AGENTS WANTED
200 Per Cent Profit. Sell our 25c 81.62 bottle Sarsaparin for $6 cts. Best Seller. Purest Medicine. Complies With Pure Drug Law. Everyone buys. Write now for terms
F. E. GREENE, 27 Lake St., Chicago

$41.00 per Week and Expenses to man with rig to introduce our Poultry Goods. Excelsior Manufacturing Co., Dept. L, Sarasota, Tex.

AGENTS, CREDIT, Perfumes, Flavors, 40c. Big profits. Empress Pad, Fenton Flyer, Diamond Agency Co., Box 202, Staple, N. New York

SELL JEWELRY on time, to country merchants. Our Watch Offering makes $50 every month. Write for proposition. A few good men. Address W. HARTON, Sales Mgr., 804 CEDAR BUILDING, ST. LOUIS, MO.

SELL TOBACCO AND CIGARS. Lively or traveling. Salary or commission. Pat time or also. Trade well. Good pay. Position. Address HOSKYOUCK TOBACCO WORKS, Box Q 18, DANVILLE, Va.

AGENTS PORTRAITS 35c, FRAMES 15c, Stereoscopes 25c, Stereoscopic Views 1c. 30 days credit. Samples & Catalog Free. Consolidated Portrait Co., Box 99 W, Adams St., Chicago

$75 Month and Expenses to experience needed, position permanent, self-seller. Please Mfrs. Co., Station M, Cincinnati, O.

$36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES TO MEN with rigs to introduce our Poultry Goods. STANDARD CO., Dept. 99, PARKERSBURG, W. Va.

$1.00 AN HOUR Introduce Electric Coats, Sweaters, and other Perfect Goods. No C. O. D. Rule. 140 Bought Free to first buyers. No. 1 A. RULE, 140 Bought Free to first buyers. No. 1 A. RULE, 140 Bought Free to first buyers. No. 1 A. RULE,

EXQUISITE LACE HAT, $1.84

The very latest Parisienne fine gauze and crinoline, combining the effect of Lace and Straw, in all the new shapes and colors, including the Merry Widow, Sailor, Rolling Brim, Flare Brim, Mushroom, Turban, Poke, Bell, Drooping Brim, Large Picture, Etc., Etc. Trimming 50 cents extra. Send for catalogue showing all styles as to shape, and a complete pattern of white material free. The large, stylish hat illustrated—consisting of double layers of white linen crinoline, finely meshed, same brim covered with same mesh, and trimmed with a large white ostrich plume, with white aigrette, held with an elegant rhinestone buckle. Effectively quilled at right side, and holding supreme position in front is a wreath of pink and white roses and foliage, same crushed, round and finished off at left side. At the back is a large bow of white satin ribbon, with long ends. Lined throughout with silk, interlining of white cambric, with attractive effect over forms. The small, stylish shape and wide brim, with the large plume, will be greatly admired in hats of any fancy millinery at $5.00 but, of no style. The hat as illustrated, trimmed, as described, is a most elegant and exclusive creation, and will be sent to you for $1.84. While the hat is originally worth $5.00, Chas. Chandler, 1238-40 Wabash Ave., 1241 State and 56 Van Buren Sts., Chicago, will not sell you this elegant dress hat at $5.00. It is for exclusive millinery trade only, and we will send this hat, trimmed as described, for $1.84, and express prepaid. Order by number 12 and remember the hat pictured was originally sold at $5.00, and is worth that price to-day or any other day, but the difference between $5.00 and $1.84 is the difference between the wholesale trade illustrating our exclusive line of millinery, and the retail trade. Send for catalogue showing all styles. Chas. Chandler, Chicago. START A WOMEN'S STORE. If you have $25.00 to invest, you can open a business in which you can make, and without experience, from $10.00 to $20.00 a week. Knowledge not given us free. Interesting booklet explains. Address "Profit" Box 1, Bible House, New York.

JOHN M. SMYTH CO. Madison Street, CHICAGO

PATENTS Send for Inventor's Prince, Book. Highest references. Best results. Promptness assured. Letters strictly confidential. Address, E. G. SIGGERS, Patent Lawyer, Washington, D.C.

SONG "HIT" will make you rich. Send us your poem. Cost or Royalty. Publishers' Union, 1367 Broadway, Room 1003, New York.

294 Piano Sale. Pianolas, $50. Player Pianos, $250. Pianos, $125. Pianos, $75. Pianos, $50. Pianos, $25. Pianos, $10. Pianos, $5. Pianos, $1. Pianos, $0.50. Pianos, $0.25. Pianos, $0.10. Pianos, $0.05. Pianos, $0.01. Pianos, $0.00. Pianos, $0.00. Pianos, $0.00

ing of the brows. "In fact, before many hours pass—"

Just there he was interrupted by the terrific clanging of a bell in a distant part of the great room. Workmen rushed past us at top speed.

"What has happened?" I inquired excitedly.

"The alarm signifies that one of the tanks, unduly loaded with a certain class of liquosilinus, has yielded to the pressure and burst. Corroding the bacilli is dangerous work, so the Factory employes; since we are fortified against them, however we may approach and watch the work of recovery."

Jumping the tide of workmen we hastened forward with the rest. Then a terrible spectacle met our eyes. The surch[illegible] of War Imposition had been [illegible] and as fast as the workmen drew n[illegible] they were smitten with a savage fever and fell upon each other with hammers, wrenches and bare fists.

Full half a hundred Zurmans, in the vicinity of the demoralized vat, were maiming and slaying each other like mad Armitigers. Yet, thanks to Professor Markham's precautions, no hostile influence played havoc with our own peace of mind.

With stern cries the three Directors raced toward us, dragging a funnel affixed to the end of a flexible tube. A great fan somewhere began sucking in the air at the funnel's mouth a mighty inhalation that echoed loudly over the noise of combat.

"It is the Ozone Machine," shouted the professor; "otherwise we shall be drawn into the emergency tank with the escaped liquosilinus, the unhappy Zurmans."

In his haste to get out of the way, Professor Markham tripped and fell. When he sprang up, it was with a scared face.

"I had a flask of my own bacilli in my pocket," he whispered in my ear as he grabbed my arm frantically. "I broke it as I fell—it's possible I have been infected something is bound to happen now."

With that he set off at wild speed, pulling me after him. We had taken perhaps fifty paces in the direction of safety when a terrific explosion shook the Factory walls and all but threw us from our feet.

A heat wave, a flash of vivid illuminant, a heart-rending cries broke out of it, and the professor and I raced on, pallid with fear.

This most mysterious story is to be continued in the Ledger of next week, leading the reader through some very strange adventures. It will richly pay you to find out what happens in this dramatic nassilitives, so subscribe for the Ledger at once. Subscriptions are coming in rapidly for the Ledger. Send in your subscription. If you are not already a subscriber, and get the Ledger for a year and six of our fine patterns free, or one grand photo-process gravures entitled Our Presidents and Ladies of the White House.

The Unwritten Law.

(Continued from page five.)

in the universe cannot save you from the consequences of your secret

"Then you admit I am a bear?"

"If the man is not silenced you are lost, even if you have lost a thousand heads of the Amazonian cat."

Marice De Marne grasped, and her visitor seemed to enjoy her fears.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SELLING OF A SECRET.

And this specter had come back to plague Lee!

Marice De Marne had resolved to keep this secret from Hector Knight. She would not tell him of the visit of the man from Bendil, nor he should not hear of it from her lips.

The ravages of sin is death, as much so now as in the early days of the takers of human life.

As for the man who had come back to tell her of the results of events in South America, she went from her home and sought another part of the city.

Marice went to her room and stood some time in front of her mirror and looked at

RHEUMATISM

Cured by New External Remedy

Which Any Sufferer is Welcome to Try Without Cost

If you have rheumatism we want you to try a pair of our Magic Foot Drafts at our expense. We are having phenomenal success with them on all sorts of cases, after doctors

had given them up. We're so sure we can cure you that we take all the risk—simply no matter whether you've had rheumatism all your life, or whether this is your first attack, send us your name today. We'll send you a pair Pair of Drafts by return mail, prepaid, to try in your own home, and we trust you to send us one dollar for them **after you are satisfied** with the benefit received—not a cent until then. We accept your word without question. Don't delay until this offer is withdrawn, but send your address today to Magic Foot Draft Co., Rm. Olivet Bldg., Jackson, Mich. Our new illustrated Book on Rheumatism coffee free with the trial Drafts. Write today

the place where the mark had been. It was gone now and, thanks to old Father Time, the skin had healed and there was no scar to trouble her.

She did not know that the man who had been employed by Noble Knight to keep track of her had a secret to tell.

There was a ring at the door and Marice went down.

The man stood on the step and at sight of her he gave a little polite salutation.

"Mrs. De Marne?"

With new fear in her heart Marice nodded and the man stepped inside.

In the light of the sumptuous parlor she looked upon him and looked him over from head to foot.

"I have come on a little business" said he, "and I am glad that L-have found you at home."

"I am alone—"

"Quite" and the man took a seat without an invitation and looked into the girl's white face.

"I am Nicholas Bragg," he went on, "I am a private detective."

"Yes? Well, Mr. Bragg, Mr. Knight's affairs are the proper persons to do business with. I have nothing to do with this affair."

The fellow crossed his legs and his manner was cool and insulting in the extreme.

Marice waited.

"I was informed the other night and came across a little performance that both astonished and pleased me.

"I probably have nothing to do with your surprise and amazement."

"Perhaps you have. It is a good deal to do with both. By the way, do you happen to know a gentleman called Paduche?"

The face of the listening beauty went pale.

"I—I—that is—"

"I see that the name is not wholly unfamiliar to you. Paduche is a queer name. Paduche is a marvelous man to some extent, and his peculiar trade seems to be increasing."

"I do not know the man. What manner of man is he?"

"Oh, he removes birthmarks and that sort of thing."

"But why have you come to me with this information? Do you think I have need of a birthday of that sort?"

"Not now Miss De Marne."

"But I—"

"I think we might come to the point. You were to see the old fellow some time ago. Was it concerning a Mrs. Paduche."

The face of the girl flushed and she looked with interest of a wild animal that watches every movement of its prey.

He and one of his men broke into a secret drawer of the stand and remain there.

"You need not take it out," said he, with his cool grin. "I am quite prepared for anything of that nature."

How insipidant was this man! What a lot of gentlemanly cat curried with him!

"You shall not insult me," said Marice through scornful lips. "I can quite able to take care of myself and I think I am a woman."

"Very well. You will hear me through though you hold death in your fair hand."

A silver-mounted revolver which Marice clutched did not drop back into the drawer, but she gave a little grip on it.

"You went to see old Paduche," continued the man. "You had him try his practical hand on yourself."

"Go, girl. I have dealt with your kind before. It's a part of my profession."

"You're a queer one."

"And if I am I owe it to people like you."

He came toward him.

"Is it worth while?"

"I want to sell my secret—"

She went white.

There was a smile on Marice's [illegible]

"I am going to sell your [illegible]

"You—you—How do I know [illegible]

"You have my word that I have not."

"The word of a man I have never met before."

"Just as you please. If you don't care to buy there are others, the district attorney, for instance."

"That implacable monster!" cried Marice pallid again. "That man who knows no mercy, but who is willing to drag honor and virtue in the dust to satisfy what he terms the demands of outraged justice"—

"The same gentleman, and you don't seem to have a very high opinion of him."

"Go on," said the impatient beauty. "What is the secret you have to sell?"

The girl had steeled herself for the worst.

"As I have before remarked," and the man seemed to relish the torture he was giving, "I saw a strange performance at old Paduche's the other night. You hold him well, I hope, but he is a fetch."

"What do you want?"

Marice for the moment forgot all [illegible] the weapon she had lifted from the [illegible]

"Perhaps I should begin with Mrs. Delmind," said the man. "She is the money part of this firm, I believe."

Paduche's friend is not at home tonight.

"With you then, miss. I want, say, a thousand dollars."

"I see needed to grasp, yet if this would be the beginning of the secret it would be cheap.

"It has not got that amount," she said as she debated for time. "You must come again."

"Can't, my dear. I must have the money now. Your friend Mrs. Deland is gone, you know—"

"What assurance have I, even if I deal with you, that you will keep your part of the bargain? What assurance, too, that you will not fall into the hands of the district attorney?"

My word, miss."

Should she buy this man's silence? Tell he had not divulged what he had more than hinted at. He had not told her that he knew about the obliteration of the purple head.

"You will not buy?" and the man got to his feet. "I can sell to those who will."

He was half-way to the door, but Marice called to him and his face turned toward her.

"It's no bargain, then."

Just then footsteps came up the outside and the door opened.

Mrs. Deland entered the room and, the man confronting Marice, stopped as the newly arrived potet blank into his [illegible]

"I did not know, Marice, that you had visitors."

The man darted a quick look at [illegible]

"You will do just as well," said he. "I came to transact my business with you but not finding you, I have been trying to trade with Miss De Marne."

"With you, Marice? What is this I see, a secret?"

Very Marice went toward her friend and rubbed at her side.

"That villain knows," she said, her voice dropped to a whisper. "He knows about the loss of Julia Burke-Deland turned full upon him. "Senator Gold Hector Knight's friend—"

"If you do go to Hutton Strong—" exclaimed.

"Yes? To Hector Knight's lawyer? I think I am fully capable of dealing with young man's father?"

At this a loud cry rang from Marice's lips and she reeled from Mrs. Deland.

"To Noble Knight? No, no! We—we—all is lost!"

And they did.

The most interesting story of mystery and detective persistence and cunning will be continued in next week's Ledger. It is a powerful offering in love and mystery awaiting publication, as well numerous thrilling stories of adventure and love and life's strange dramas. Now is an excellent time to subscribe and get our splendid Presidents and Ladies of the White House or any six of our fashionable patterns free, these are announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

House of the Midnight Sound.

(Continued from page seven.)

ruffled sound from across the room. It the mysterious midnight sound.

CHAPTER XVI

KEENEYES CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP.

As soon as the mysterious midnight sound smote upon their ears, coming from the seat of the judge, Keeneyes, who was already upon his feet, swiftly opened the door.

If Allen or Judge Havens expected the door to creak, that was because they were accustomed to the deceptive ways of [illegible] habits. As a matter of fact [illegible] door swung forth, soft. As soon as was open, the light from the dark lantern swept out and, having traversed the adjoining apartment, reached the head of the stairs.

Keeneyes tiptoed to the stairway to the others to follow suit.

He looked down the flight of s[illegible]

A man with a dark lantern and a long, white beard stood upon the stairs, stooped over a box, and the figure of a man standing down over some object. Evidently the flashing of the light had not disturbed him [illegible] Keeneyes held the dark lantern in h[illegible] hand. He threw its beams full upon the old man. Judge Havens started, for he missed the midnight intruder as the of the house next door—Thomas Overstreet.

The old fellow started up and his face was upon them. His wide, glassy eyes seemed to fix them with the stare of a man [illegible] stuffed.

But the old man was in a trance, and knew nothing of the present. He was living over the night of the murder, forty years ago.

He did not linger long. Soon he turned about and passed straight down the stairs. The nerves [illegible] after the ghostly form, and Havens and Allen kept close behind the detective.

Thomas Overstreet went into the back room, straight to the safe which stood open. Keeneyes looked swiftly about and was pleased to find [illegible] at the head of the room. Evidently Moore had obeyed instruction probably [illegible] crouched in the [illegible] waiting for the signal word to pull the rope.

The unconscious old man reached the cellar door and paused. He turned about his unseeing face full of listening. It was now that Keeneyes changed his purpose. He had made provision for every contingency, but it was not necessary to wait till the old man was entangled in the cellar. It would be a simple matter for Jack Allen to lock the door. The irresolute attitude of the sleeping man gave him the opportunity to capture him without difficulty.

Keeneyes accordingly held his dark lantern above his head and drawing his pistol held it a sharp voice. "Thomas Overstreet!"

The sleeping man [illegible] slowly but not [illegible] state. He leaped straight in the air and grasped his head in convulsive hold.

But Judge Havens and Jack Allen had been no less startled by the unexpected breaking of the stillness. With nerves already wrought to tightest tension, the sharp, quick voice of the detective caused them to start back violently.

Judge Havens jumped as if he had received an electric shock. His feet struck one of the uprights that had been left [illegible] from the wooden framework used [illegible] old Dane. Jansen Moore had left it leaning against the wall in a position none too secure. It fell forward, upper end smashed into the dark [illegible] knocking it out of the detective's hand and breaking the [illegible]

The light was [illegible]

The heavy timber fell to the bare floor with a thud and a startling echo.

From the position of the cellar door came a frightful cry.

In the rear was to be heard the sound of fleeing feet.

"Merciful Heaven!" an ejaculation from Judge Havens.

The cellar door closed [illegible] a bang [illegible] the cellar." exclaimed Keeneyes in great excitement. "Come, Judge; Allen, lock us in!"

"Strike a light," faltered the [illegible] not going down there in the d[illegible]

In the rear was to be [illegible] dy at the door; "do you hear, [illegible] was no answer.

"I think he has run away." fal[illegible] the [illegible]

Keeneyes desperately struck a match and hastily down into the cellar, first preserving himself as a possible mark for any [illegible] marksman. He did not stand thus [illegible] moment.

Then he turned back into the room where Judge Havens was standing in a state of uncertainty. The lighted match [illegible] [illegible] Jack Allen was indeed [illegible] a bare feet they had heard [illegible] tapering off in the rear.

"Look out for this broken glass," said Keeneyes quietly as he picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket.

What are you going to do?" the judge asked, "did he get away?"

"I think he has been," said Keeneyes leisurely. "There is an inverted barrel in the cellar under which he may be [illegible] Otherwise he has made his escape through [illegible] direction."

"But we don't you tell to Mr. Moore—"

"He would stop up the drainpipe—"

"And we should [illegible] for [illegible] ready done [illegible]

"It waiting [illegible] you to call Gludstone [illegible]

"It would appear, [illegible] you descend, Judge."

"You are long as there is a [illegible]

"I think it is [illegible] remarked Keeneyes, serenely, "but we will not wait for him."

He went down the cellar stairs, followed by Judge Havens. They cautiously drew from the barrel Keeneyes' dark lantern above. It fell over upon its side. It was empty.

"No," said Keeneyes, standing toward the drainpipe which was effect [illegible] stopped up by the ingenious weight of the old iron, "our murderer has really eluded us."

Judge Havens stared blankly at the detective. Keeneyes seated himself upon the barrel and gently rocked himself to and fro.

Suddenly a click was heard from above. Judge Havens [illegible]

"Ah," said Keeneyes with a smile, "your friend has locked us in. This is indeed interesting. We are prisoners in the [illegible] cens."

At that moment a cry came from above [illegible] words [illegible]

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CHAPTER XXII.
DOLAN AND WHITESIDE APPEAR AGAIN.

Mr. Gates was sent for at once, and when he came up to Dolan he was told that Dolan and Whiteside had been there, claiming that they owned ten of the fifteen claims, through having purchased them from a man named Skupple, who held a certificate of entry from the register at Fair Play.

"You saw the certificate, of course?" remarked Mr. Gates

"Yes, sir; it seemed all straight. But, they will be here in a little while, and you can look at it yourself."

"Skupple may have entered the claims, all right," said Mr. Gates, "but he did not do the necessary assessment work, as is required by the laws of Colorado, and that will make the certificate of entry valueless. I feel certain."

"I never thought of that!" exclaimed Dolan. "There had been no work done here, that is certain, so we are all right!"

"I think so, Dolan; however, rather than have any trouble, we will pay Dolan and Whiteside a fair sum for the certificate."

"We would be willing to accept two thousand dollars, though!" with a whimsical smile.

"Hardly! No, we will offer them one hundred dollars apiece, and if they won't accept that, we will make a fight, for we don't have to be satisfied with nothing."

"They will make a fight, they said."

"Let them. Little good it will do them," "Yas, let 'em fight—dey wants nuttin' bad," said Hank, he and Mark being present.

"They're comin' now, I guess," said Mark. "I hear footsteps."

"Shall I do the talking?" queried Mr. Gates.

"Yes, indeed!" said Roy, and Hank and Mark nodded.

Then there came a knock on the door, and Mr. Gates called out:

"Come in!"

The door opened and in came Dolan and Whiteside. When they saw Mr. Gates they nodded and looked somewhat astonished, but soon put on a bold front.

"Did you want me, Mr. Gates curtly.

The two did so.

"Let me see that certificate," and Mr. Gates held out his hand.

Dolan drew a dirty, faded piece of paper from his pocket and handed it to the speaker.

Mr. Gates unfolded the paper and looked at it carefully.

It seems to be all regular and genuine," he said.

"Sure, sure, it's reglar."

Why didn't Skupple work the mine?"

"He didn't know that wuz mica heer. He wuz arter gol', an' jest entered ther claims on ther chance they might be gol' heer. Then he heerd uv some rich strikes over ther range an' went thar, an' then up inter Montany, an' never got back till erbout a month ergo."

"I see; then he never did any assessment work on these claims."

Dolan and Whiteside exchanged glances and fidgeted uneasily.

"I guess he did," Dolan said.

"No, he did not. You know he didn't!"

"He—wal, et don' make no difference. He hez ye legal claim ter them claims, an'—"

"The laws of the State expressly provide that one hundred dollars' worth of work must be done on each claim, once each year, for five years, Dolan; and as Skupple did not do any assessment work, his claim to the claims is invalidated, and that certificate is not worth the paper it is written on; but, in order that there may be no shadow of anything against our title, we will pay you one hundred dollars apiece, and will transfer this certificate to our company and give up all claim to the property herein mentioned."

The two laughed harshly and sneeringly.

"Er hundred dollars apiece—bah!" cried Dolan. "We won' do et! Not much! Make et fifty thousan' dollars apiece, an' we'll talk ter ye."

"That's right; not er cent less'n fifty thousan'!" coincided Whiteside.

"Bah! You are fools, or else you think we are," said Mr. Gates. "You have no legal claim to these claims, and you will accept the hundred dollars apiece or you will get nothing. Take your choice."

"An' ye jest listen ter me!" cried Dolan. "We hev er claim on ev'ry one uv ther fifteen claims hear an' we're goin' ter hev at least fifty thousan' dollars apiece out uv dhis comp'ny, or else we'll tase possession uv ther mine, thet's what!"

"Ye bet we will!" nodded Whiteside.

Mr. Gates laughed scornfully.

"How do you propose taking possession of the mine?" he queried. "By legal process?"

"No, by force!"

"Ye bet!" from Whiteside.

"Ah, indeed! Well, Dolan, let me tell you something: If you try anything like that you will get less than a pound of flesh, nothing more!"

Somebuddy else'll git er pine box, too, ye bet!" growled Dolan.

"Where will you get your men?" queried Mr. Gates.

"I'll git 'em, all right, don' ye worry!" with a leer.

Then they took their departure without more words.

"Do you think they will try to make us any trouble, Mr. Gates?" queried Roy.

"No, I don't, Roy, but it won't do any harm to be on the lookout for a while."

Then Mr. Gates went back to Richton to look after his business. He did not think that Dolan and Whiteside would be heard from again.

But he was mistaken, for that night about ten o'clock a party consisting of about twenty men, led by Captain Jericho, the road agent, and Bill Dolan and Jim Whiteside, suddenly appeared at the mine and made prisoners of Roy, Hank and Mark, and forced the miners to leave the mine, under penalty of being shot, if they refused to do so or showed fight.

"Now we've got this here mine!" chuckled Bill Dolan, "an' we're goin' ter keep et, ye bet! Possession is nine p'ints, an' we've got possession!"

CHAPTER XXIII.
THE SIEGE AT THE MINE.

One of the miners who had been forced to leave the mine at once set out on foot and notified Mr. Gates of the capture of the mine, and the latter was angered by the tidings.

"Well, who would have thought that they would attempt any such high-handed piece of work as that!" he exclaimed

"Oh, they're desperate men," said the miner, "an' chet Captain Jericho ain't afeered of nothin', no how!"

"Well, we will attend to his case tomorrow," said Mr. Gates. "We will take the mine away from them, or kill the last one of them!"

"That they hev got Roy an' Hank an' Mark in ther power," said the miner, 'an' ef we attackt them they may put the three ter death."

"I hardly think they would dare do that." said Mr. Gates after a pause.

"Ye kain't tell what them skunnels mought do," he said.

"True; well, we'll have to meet that issue when it is forced upon us."

Next morning Mr. Gates set out for Mineville—as the place was called—and took with him seventeen men, were thirty of them, all armed with Winchesters and revolvers.

In Mineville he secured the services of twenty more men, by agreement to pay them five dollars a day to fight against the desperadoes who had seized the mine.

Then, with his little army, he marched up to the mine.

The desperadoes had seen them coming, and had retreated into the mine, barricading the entrance with stones, behind which they crouched, weapons in hand.

Mr. Gates advanced, with a white handkerchief held up, to signify that he wished to parley.

Bill Dolan came forth to meet him.

"Wal, what d'ye want?" the rascal queried, tersely.

"I want you and your gang to evacuate," was the reply.

"I spose ye mean thet ye want us ter git out."

"That is it, exactly."

"Wal, 'taint hev ter jest keep on wantin'," Dolan said.

"You won't do it, eh?"

"Not on yer life!"

Mr. Gates turned and waved his hand toward his little army of men.

"Look there," he said.

"I see 'em."

"There are fifty men there."

"Yas!"

"And you have not more than twenty!"

"Mebby not, but, ye see, we're in possession uv ther mine, an' hev got er barricade, an' kin roll out enough twice ez many men ez what ye've got."

"You are a fool, Dolan. You can't do anything of the kind."

"We'll show ye!" with a leer.

"Then you refuse to come out and give up this foolish piece of business?"

Dolan nodded vigorously.

"Ye bet!" he said.

"Your blood will be on your own heads' warningly.

"Yas, an' er lot uv yer blood will be on your own heads, too!" with a grin.

"See here, Dolan, let me tell you something."

"Go erhead."

"You are in the mine there; are in possession, true, but you have no provisions in there, and we can starve you out in a day or two, so what is the use of making a fight?"

"Ef ye starve us out ye'll starve out Roy Wells an' Hank Rogers an' Mark Morgan, understan'!" grinned Dolan.

"If you harm a hair of their heads I will kill the last one of your gang!" declared Gates sternly.

"We'll riddle ye with bullets unless ye go erway an' leave us erlone!" declared Dolan.

"If you harm them no mercy will shown any of you!" cried Mr. Gates.

"Bah! Ye won't dare do nothin'! If you know when you are well off!"

"Bah! Who's afraid uv ye!"

"Perhaps not, but you know me, Dolan, and you know that when I say a thing I mean it."

Dolan gave utterance to an inarticulate sound, and laughed and strode back to the mine, and entered.

Mr. Gates returned to where his men stood.

"Air they goin' ter come out?" queried one sagely.

"No, I think they will stick, at least."

"An' air we goin' ter go fur 'em right erway?" from another.

Mr. Gates shook his head.

"No," he said; "they are protected by that barricade, and they would be able to kill a number of us. I think the best thing to do is to take up our position in such a manner that they cannot leave the mine without our seeing them, and then starve them out."

"Mebby thet's bes'," agreed the miner who had first spoken.

This plan was put into effect. The besieging army stretched itself from the cliff, on one side of the entrance to the mine, around to the cliff again, on the right of the entrance. The men concealed themselves behind rocks and trees so as to not afford a target for the desperadoes in the mine.

In this manner that day wore away and night had first spoken.

The night passed quietly and next morning the siege was continued.

About noon Dolan again appeared, carrying a white handkerchief, and Mr. Gates advanced to meet him.

"Well?" he queried, as he paused in front of the desperado.

"I've come fer tell ye thet 'nless ye go erway within ther hour an' leave us erlone, we won' hev ther prisoners full uv holes an' throw ther carkasses out ter ye!" he said.

Mr. Gates' face darkened, and he eyed the desperado sternly.

"If you do that," he said, almost fiercely, "you can't run any bluff on me! We are not going to raise the siege, not a bit of it. And if you harm a hair of the prisoners, not one of your gang shall escape! We will shoot down every last one of you, till the last one of you! Do you understand?"

"Bah! Ye kain't skeer me!"

"I'm not trying to scare you. I am telling you a plain truth, that is all! If you harm the prisoners, not one of your gang shall live to see another sunrise!"

It was evident that Dolan was impressed, though he tried to laugh as if he were not. He shuffled uneasily from one foot to the other, and presently he said:

"How much will ye giv' me of I'll giv' up ther certificate uv entry ter ther ten claims an' all ther rest go erway an' leave ye in possession, like ye wuz afore?"

"I'll give you the two hundred dollars, the same as I offered to do before."

"Bah! Thet's nothin' ertall!"

"That's all you will get, and is more than you ought to have."

"But we paid Skupple more'n thet fur ther certificate."

"I don't believe it. I don't believe that you paid him a cent, but he let you have the certificate, and you are to give him a share of what you get through its use."

Dolan flushed up, and it was plain that Mr. Gates had hit the mark.

"Tain't so!" he growled.

"That's all right; it doesn't matter, anyway. Do you accept my offer of two hundred dollars?"

"No, I don't!"

"All right, suit yourself, but this is the

last chance you will have to get even that amount."

"If I kain't git more'n thet, I don' want enythin'!" growled Dolan, and then he turned and strode back toward the entrance to the mine.

"Don't forget what I have told you, Dolan!" called Mr. Gates warningly.

There was no reply.

Doan clambered to the top of the barricade and disappeared from view, and a few minutes later several pistol-shots were heard from within the mine.

"They hev shot their pris'ners!" cried one of the miners aghast.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MINE IN ITS RIGHTFUL OWNERS' HANDS AGAIN.

"If they have!" grated Mr. Gates, "we will—"

At this moment a dark-faced man appeared at the entrance to the mine.

"It's Cap'n Jericho!" cried one of the miners.

The miner was right: it was Captain Jericho, and he was advancing a white handkerchief as a flag of truce.

Mr. Gates advanced and met him halfway.

"What do you want?" he queried. "Did you shoot the prisoners?"

There was a grim, threatening intonation to his voice as he asked the last query.

"No," replied Captain Jericho, "we didn't shoot the prisoners. I had a few words with Dolan, and we, and some of my men and two or three of his, exchanged shots. Dolan is lying here, incapable of bothering you or any one else any more." This was said coolly, and Mr. Gates asked with interest:

"It's from the Express Company."

"What was the trouble?"

"I wanted that we should capitulate and evacuate the mine and leave here, and Dolan did not want to do so. He wanted to hold onto the mine. He grew angry, and we had recourse to weapons. The matter is settled, and now I am ready to make terms with you."

"What kind of terms do you wish to make?"

"I want that myself and men shall be permitted to leave here unmolested. This kind of work is out of my line, anyway. We have three of your friends in there, prisoners, and could put them to death, if we so desired, but if you will agree to let us leave the mine unmolested I will agree that they shall not be injured."

"You are ready to give up the fight for the mine?"

"Yes; as I said, that sort of thing is out of my line, and I don't see why I was such a fool to go into it in the first place."

"Do you speak for all who are in there—Dolan's men as well as your own?"

"Yes; Dolan is dead and Whiteside is wounded, so I am in command of all in there."

"Very good. Leave the mine at once, taking Dolan's body and Whiteside with you and leaving the prisoners behind, and you shall not be harmed."

"Good enough! We will be away in a jiffy—and you may be sure that I shall not undertake any more such work as this. I shall confine my efforts to the line with which I am familiar."

"Better quit it, and turn to an honest life. If you don't, you will wind up at the end of a rope one of these days."

"I'll risk it. Well, so long."

Mr. Gates nodded, and Captain Jericho returned to the mine. He was out of sight only a few minutes, and then some of his men tore the rocks away from the entrance of the mine, and the desperadoes came forth. Two of their number were supporting a wounded man, and four were carrying a dead body—that of Dolan.

Mr. Gates stepped forward and addressed Captain Jericho:

"There is a document in his pocket," he said, "a certificate of entry of some claim. I would like to have it."

"All right, you are welcome to it," said Captain Jericho. Help yourself."

Mr. Gates felt in the pockets of the dead man, and drew forth the certificate, to which he at once applied a match, and it was quickly consumed.

"Now you may go," he said.

And Captain Jericho and his gang of desperadoes went.

Then Mr. Gates and a number of the miners hastened into the mine and cut the bonds of the three prisoners, Roy, Hank and Mark, freeing them.

They said that they had not been ill-treated, but they had not had anything to eat since they were made prisoners and were nearly starved.

They were given food, and in the meantime Mr. Gates had paid off the twenty men that he had hired to help his miners, and had sent his own miners back to Richton, and had put the mica miners to work again.

Soon everything was running as smoothly as had been the case before the appearance of the outlaws, and no further trouble from that source was apprehended.

Dolan is dead, Whiteside is wounded, and the certificate is not in existence, so there will be no further trouble from that quarter," said Mr. Gates.

"I judge that you are right, sir," agreed Roy.

Roy wrote to his mother and sister in New York frequently, telling them of his wonderful success, and they wrote him pleasing letters in reply. As the holiday season drew near, his mother and sister began insisting that he come home to spend Christmas, and at last he decided to do so.

He went down to Cripple Creek and told May, and said that he would go if she would go with him and remain in New York and make her home with his mother and sister.

"But I am nothing to them, Roy," said May; "they don't even know me, and they might not want me at all."

"But I want you, May," said Roy earnestly. "I love little sweetheart and I am going to make you my wife when I am of age, if you are willing. Are you?"

The girl's eyes drooped, and she blushed like a peony, and then presently she said, almost in a whisper, but in a voice that thrilled Roy through and through:

"Yes, Roy—I'm willing."

"Then we'll go back to New York together!" he cried. "And you shall stay and make your home with my mother and sister, and then when I am twenty-one we will be married!"

"Very well, Roy; it shall be just as you say, dear."

Roy told Mrs. Gates and Harriet what had been decided upon, and they both approved of the plan, and then they congratulated both on their engagement.

"You will be happy, I know," said Mrs. Gates.

"Yes, of course they will, mother!" from Harriet.

"We will miss you, May," went on Mrs. Gates.

"Yes, I shall be lonesome," said Harriet, "but I'm going to come to New York with Roy some time when he is going home on a visit, and spend a few weeks with you, May."

"Months, you mean, Harriet!" cried May, seizing the other in her arms and hugging and kissing her.

A few days later Roy and May boarded the train and went to Canon City where they got aboard the Limited and were soon speeding toward New York.

When the newsboy came through the train Roy was delighted to see that it was his friend Joe Saunders.

Joe did not recognize Roy at first glance, as he was not thinking of such a thing as that his friend might be on the train, and then the fact that there was a girl with Roy threw him off the track also. But when he got a fair look at Roy he gave utterance to an exclamation of amazement and delight:

"Great Jones! if it isn't Roy!"

"Yes," said Roy, laughing, and then he shook hands with Joe, and introduced him to May.

"I'll come back into the baggage car and have a talk with you presently, Joe," said Roy.

"All right," and with a low bow to May the candy "butcher" went on.

Roy told May all about Joe, and how he (Roy) had come to Colorado in Joe's company without having to pay fare, because he was the newsboy's friend. He told about the fight with the train robbers also, and gave Joe credit for being a very brave youth. And May easily guessed that Roy had proved himself to be just as brave.

Later on Roy went back to the baggage car and had a long talk with Joe, and with Mr. McGowen, the express messenger, for he was still on this run.

"There is something that I have been keeping for you, Roy," said McGowen, and he took a gold watch out of his desk and handed it to the youth. "It is from the express company, in token of their appreciation of what you did for them when you helped me fight the train robbers off. Joe has one just like it."

It was a fine gold watch, with an inscription on the inside of the front cover, stating why it was given and to whom.

"Please tell them that I thank them very much for the watch," said Roy. "I shall keep it always."

"Very well, Roy."

Joe and McGowen were both delighted to hear that Roy had struck it rich, and congratulated him on his good fortune.

"You certainly are lucky, Roy!" said Joe.

"Yes," agreed Roy, thinking of May as much as of the mica mine; "I am the luckiest boy in the world!"

When Roy went back into the coach where May was he showed her the watch, and she was delighted.

"That is splendid!" she said. "I am so glad that they gave it to you, Roy!"

When Roy and May reached the youth's home in New York they were given a joyous welcome, indeed; Mrs. Wells and Katie

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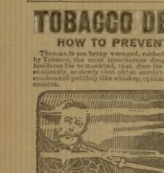

Millions are robbed of health and murdered by tobacco, whose hundreds are affected by those four well-known drugs, opium, cocaine and morphine, and for the benefit of disillusioning drug in the form of tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, pipe, chewing and snuff habits, and whose filth and poisons, with which they are crowded with its victims' children are born prematurely, deformed and models in human god odious.

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fell in love with May right away, and made her feel at home from the first moment that she entered the house.

Of course, Roy had to tell the story of his finding of the mine mine, and also his adventures in securing it and holding it, and his partner's treachery after they had been wonderfully lucky.

"Yes, I have," he coincided; "I am the luckiest boy in the world, and I have the best mother and sister and sweetheart in the world, too."

May blushed rosily, and was glad when Katie threw her arms around her neck and hugged and kissed her, as it enabled her to hide her confusion.

Roy had brought home a draft for twenty thousand dollars, and he deposited it in a bank, and then next day took his mother, sister and sweetheart out and they found a pretty place that could be bought for ten thousand dollars, and he purchased it at once, and then they went and bought the furniture necessary to furnish it, and had it sent to the house at once.

One week later they were installed in their new home, and Roy's mother and sister miss dinner there, and it was as happy a little family as there was in all Greater New York that day.

Roy stayed till after New Year's, and then finds good-by to his loved ones and went back to Colorado and his mica mine, which was to make him famous the world over before another year should elapse.

Roy bought a house in Cripple Creek, near the mine, and had his mother and sister and sweetheart spent the summers there each year, and the winters in town, and then there was a wedding in the Cripple Creek home, as May said she would rather be married there than in New York, as family could be present, than to be married in New York.

It was a happy occasion, and there never was a happier couple than Roy and May.

In addition to the members of the Gates family, Hank Rogers and Mary Morgan were present at the wedding, and they were glad to see Roy so happy. They liked him immensely and were grateful to him for giving them an interest in the great mica mine, making them independent for the rest of their lives.

Roy was worth more than a quarter of a million cash the day he was married and his interest in the great mica mine was valued at one million dollars. We by-and-by

He bought a "brown stone front" mansion on Fifth Avenue, New York, and winters were spent there and the summers at the home in Cripple Creek.

Joe Saunders got over his grief from Roy and came and learned the mining business, and was later on promoted to assistant superintendent at the mine, and he wanted to quit work and enjoy himself in idleness for awhile, but Roy and Hank Rogers, who were in the mine, as he claimed that he might never have the chance to retire from active work, and make the "strike" had not Joe "deadheaded" him out there, in the baggage car.

It was never learned who May's parents were, but that they were people from whom could be no doubt, for May had all the attributes of a true-hearted, noble woman.

Hank Rogers and Mary Morgan both knocked off working and lived in ease in Cripple Creek.

Captain Jericho's hand was broken up about a year after the attempt to shoot had been made to capture the mica mine, and Captain Jericho himself was killed while resisting capture.

Jim Whiteside did not die of his wound, but left the country as soon as he was able to travel.

Mrs. Wells and Katie live with Roy and May, and they have become a source of pleasure and harmony. But indications are that Katie will, ere long, always, for Joe Saunders is a frequent caller, and, well —the man that issues marriage licenses would starve out a lot of young people coaxed marrying, you know.

Thus ends the story of Roy Wells' "Million-Dollar Strike." In truth he had been lucky—so lucky, in fact, that his claim that he was "the luckiest boy in the world" was not at all extravagant or far-fetched.

THE END.

A Trifling Detail.

"How's Mary Ellen getting on?" asked one of the neighbors of Mrs. Austin returned from a visit. She fixed a keen gaze on Mrs. Austin, for reports of Mrs. Ellen's domestic troubles had reached the village some time before.

"Why, she's got everything fixed up real nice," said Mrs. Austin slowly. "She has a good house and a cow, and some o' the likliest hens, and a couple o' pigs, and—"

"Is it true that her husband has reglar temper tantrums every little while?" persisted the neighbor.

"Well," said Mrs. Austin, "I don't see any need of dwelling on that. When folks have a good deal of it Uncle sees of the critters is liable to be ailing now and then."

Quieted.

As there was no diner attached to the train the hungry passenger touched the gruff conductor on the arm.

"May I ask you a question?" ventured the passenger.

"If you hurry up about it," snapped the conductor.

"Well, how long does this train stop for dinner?"

"It don't stop at all."

"And why not?"

"Because this train doesn't eat dinner."

And then the gruff conductor strode off with all the pomp of a drum major in a minstrel show.

The Humorous Scientist.

"Here is a scientist who says mankind could soon learn to wag its ears."

"He must be something of a wag himself."

House of the Midnight Sound.

(Continued from page eleven.)

gentlemen ought not to employ.

"Oh," exclaimed Judge Havelin, "I am afraid Jack has stepped on some of that glass."

"I'm," said Keeneyes gruffly. "I do not think he will run away again in so great a hurry. But do you understand what has happened, Judge? I will elucidate.

"Jansen Moore was lying in the drainpipe, waiting to steal without 'Gudgers.' He hears our murderer running down into the cellar, he hears the banging of the cellar door, the unsnuffing of my lantern, which I owe to you, my dear Judge, and the dying yell of your friend, Mr. Allen, and he naturally excites my friend, Jansen Moore. He draws a sound at the mouth of the filing. It is the murderer, preparing to escape through his natural exit. The murderer gets into the pipe, head first, no doubt. Moore hears his scraping along the sides and can wait no longer. He pulled the rope. Then what happens? He has closed himself up with our murderer in terribly close quarters. They are in darkness, doubtless, face to face. Perhaps a tragedy is in progress. Perhaps a struggle. But it will be all the same a hundred years from now. As for you and me, we cannot go to the rescue. Thanks to Jack Allen.

"I will call him to unlock the door," said Jack.

"No," said Keeneyes sternly.

"Jack! Jack!" shouted the judge, "let us out of here!"

Keeneyes rocked himself on his barrel.

"Jack Allen," he remarked, as he continued Judge Havens angrily.

"There are always times in my career," said Keeneyes, "when I have to depend upon other people for the success of certain important movements. As can, by times I never expect perfect success. I foresee no success. It has happened that Jansen Moore pulled his rope too soon and Mr. Allen locked the door too late. Here we are. And here we shall remain. It suits us out!"

Judge Havens raised his voice angrily. "Let us out! Let us out!"

"Whatever happens down below in the drain-pipe," Keeneyes went on, unmoved by Judge Havens' demonstration, "we shall not be disturbed. Mr. Allen, who is known by Mr. Allen, who is known by Mr. Allen, who is known by

From Child Land.

"Now, Mabel," said her mother one morning, "do you think you can remember to speak kindly to little brother while mamma goes out shopping?"

"Yes'm," replied 5-year-old Mabel.

"And if you don't say a single cross word to him while I'm gone I'll bring home a whole box of candy for you."

Mabel solemnly promised. Two hours later mamma returned to find little brother serenely sleeping and small Mabel waiting to claim her reward. After she had given it to her mamma again remarked:

"And so my little daughter didn't say a cross word to brother?"

"No, not a single one, mamma, not even when he poked the sawdust from my doll."

"You didn't, dear?"

"No'm, I didn't say a word. I just took my little chair and knocked him over the head with it."

A little 5-year-old was sent to the butcher shop. "Please, sir, mother wants two cents' worth of liver for the cat. Not so fat, as the last time. It made father sick."

The Sunday school teacher of an infant class was instructing her pupils in the mysteries of the Trinity. One small bit of humanity was exceedingly puzzled by the subject and the teacher, trying to make it clear to him, asked little Jamie if he had three of any particular article with him. Jamie promptly extracted three buttons from his pocket and handed them to his instructress, and she laid them one by one in his chubby palm, saying:

"Let this one be the Father, this one the Son and this one the Holy Ghost. Bring them back next Sunday so I may see if you remember their meaning."

Upon being questioned as to the Trinity the following Sabbath Jamie pulled forth a button, saying: "This is the Father," then another, "and this is the Son," and after a thorough search in all his pockets for the third, exclaimed:

"O, ma sewed the Holy Ghost on my trousers this morning!"

My nephew, aged 2½ years, while out walking fell on the stone sidewalk. Grieved by picking himself up and looked down a moment, and said: "'Scuse yourself, sidewalk."

Margaret was 4 years old and her brother John, 5½. Mother had always insisted that they wear their rubbers when outdoors, and they disliked them much. Recently John's mother bought him a new pair of heavy boys' shoes and told him that he need not wear his rubbers any more.

John was overjoyed, of course, and also gloated over the fact that Margaret had to continue wearing them, while he could go without.

That night when they were getting ready for bed John looked over to Margaret and said:

"I know dess free persons what don't have to wear rubbers." No answer from Margaret, and again John said: "I know dess free persons what don't have to wear rubbers."

Margaret could stand it no longer, and said, "Well, who?" and John said, "Me, Roosevelt and God."

A little girl of 3 years was given a bag of peanuts by her father. She helped herself to one and being unable to break the shell, she said: "Papa, will you please unbutton this peanut for me?"

A friend in need usually needs all he can induce you to give up—and then some.

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1843 LADIES' TUCKED SHIRT-WAIST 32 TO 42 INCHES BUST MEASURE
1845 LADIES' JUMPER 32 TO 42 INCHES BUST MEASURE
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1847 LADIES' BLOUSE JACKET 32 TO 42 INCHES BUST MEASURE
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FOR

YOUTHFUL EYES

GETTIN' THE KINDLIN' IN.

When a feller goes to school all day,
An' gits home late and wants to play,
Then Pa or Ma is sure to say,
"Go git the kindlin' in."

A feller's always hungry, too,
When he gits home, an' I tell you
He feels too weak an' limp clear through
To git the kindlin' in.

En if you just don't go right straight,
But put it off, an' kinder wait,
First thing you know it's gittin' late
To git the kindlin' in.

An' some nights when you clean forget,
An git to bed, it makes you sweat
To hear Pa call—'n you limp, you bet,
To git the kindlin' in.

Our woodshed's dark as pitch at night,
An' Pa won't let you take a light,
Because he said you didn't do right,
An' git the kindlin' in.

An' when you hear the lensiest sound
It makes you 'fraid, an' you look round,
An' grab the hatchet an' 'gin to pound,
To git the kindlin' in.

An' way off in the wortstest darks
There's something shines like two bright sparks,
An' scares you, till your doggie barks,
If you git the kindlin' in.

An' Saturday's had as it can be,
'Cause that's a playtime, don't you see?
But all day long they worry me
To git the kindlin' in.

An' when us fellers have a show,
An' I'm the manager, you know,
How can I tell them I must go
An' git the kindlin' in?

The manager just must be there,
To make the boys play straight an' fair—
When I'm the clown, then I don't care
Who gits the kindlin' in.

I wish't we lived where it was hot;
I'd like that fine, I tell you what—
Folks wouldn't care when I forgot
To git the kindlin' in.

A Toy Watch.

It was a hot afternoon in August, so hot that most of the children were kept indoors; but in some way Babe Sweet and James Holton managed to be out. It is probable that they had slipped out of the large hotel, unobserved by their nurses, yards from shore, where they caught on some seaweed.

"Oh, my beads!" exclaimed Babe; "get them for me, James."

"What are they good for?" asked the boy.

"Oh, they are Dolly's necklace," answered Babe.

"Well, it won't hurt her to lose them," he replied.

"Oh, James, won't you get them?" begged Babe. "I will give you anything you want if you will only get them."

"The only thing I want is a watch and chain, and you won't get that," he answered.

For an instant Babe's face was clouded, then it brightened and she said: "I will give you a watch and chain if you will only get my beads."

"Honest?" he demanded.

"Yes, honest true," she said.

The beads were soon restored to their owner, Babe's tears dried, and she was happy again.

In a few minutes Mr. Holton came after the children. He said: "They have been hunting everywhere for you."

James did not seem to mind the scolding he received on account of the wet shoes, for the thought of the watch and chain was topmost in his mind.

"Now, don't forget, Babe," were his parting words.

"I will give it to you at tea," she replied.

When James went down to tea he found a little box under his plate. He did not want his folks to see it, so he stuck it into his pocket. After supper he hurried off by himself to have a peep at his new treasure. When he opened the box he found a little tin watch and chain. His eager face clouded, for he had expected a real watch. He said he would take it right back to Babe at something made kind him change his mind, and instead he put it in his pocket and said: "It is just like a girl."

The icicles have formed their crystals and the buttercups have bloomed a score of times since then.

Two men in uniform were standing on the porch of a hospital. The taller and darker one asked his companion how Captain Holton was.

"Well," replied the companion, "the doctor says he will live, but it was a narrow escape. The bullet caught in a little tin watch he had in his vest pocket."

Two weeks afterward a merry crowd of soldiers were gathered around the bedside of Captain Holton, to hear the story of the little tin watch, which the reader already knows.

"Yes, at first I thought the watch worthless, but I didn't want to hurt the girl's feelings by telling it. As I grew older the watch grew dearer to me; when I entered the army I carried it with me. At times I thought I was foolish; still I wouldn't part with it. Two weeks ago it saved my life, so it is even dearer than before."

Grandma's "Moroccos."

Grandmother was showing the girls, Lena, Jennie and Edna, how to "turn off." They had five rock maples tapped up in the pasture. The snow was deep, but they brought the sap down over the hard crust in pails. Pretty hard work, but they wanted to make some little sugar cakes to nibble through the spring.

So grandma was helping them to cleanse the strap with a little snow, boil it down thick, then stir it till it "grained" into sugar, with the aid all the time "tasting" with whittled sticks until grandma said there wouldn't be enough left to make a "sheepskin."

"When I was a little girl," said grandma, stirring the syrup briskly to keep it from running over, "my brother 'Lisher made sugar one spring at the halves for Uncle Enoch. His share came, and the measure where the maples grew wasn't more than half a mile off," she remembered, "if I would help him, to get me a pair of morocco shoes.

"That was the height of happiness. None of the girls in our neighborhood had anything better than calfskin shoes, made by the neighborhood cobbler; and that was what I always had.

"It was a beautiful spring, freezing hard crusts at night and thawing days. Uncle Enoch had a little camp, with a stone arch inside for boiling sap. I used to help mother cook dinners for them, and carry warm dinners from home and tend the fire when he was busy.

"We got along splendid, till one night after we had been sapping about two weeks. 'Lisher had gone home as usual, to do the chores, and after building up a bright fire under the great kettle, for it was a good cold dark night, he could get back. I shut the camp door—it was a shaky old door, with a great crack up and down it that you could run your hand through—and sat down before it, cracking acorns and nibbling at them to keep me awake.

"I hadn't set there very long when I heard a great tramping on the snow outside. I thought sure it was 'Lisher and jumped up to open the door, for I was dreadfully hungry waiting for the supper of bread and sausages that mother used to send me.

"Just then away went the steps around the camp—crunch—crunch—crunch—crunch! in the crust. My heart flew into my mouth! That wasn't 'Lisher! He had on snowshoes and couldn't run! What could it be?

"In a minute back came the tramping—crunch—crunch—crunch! Now down to the sah heap, now out to the sap barrels and I could hear them rolling over and over on the crust, then back to the camp.

"Oh, dear! It was coming nearer—nearer! Now it ran along under the little window, now it got to the door.

"Snuff—snuff—snuff! went a great black nose up and down that wide crack. I could see it, and the creature pressed so hard against the rickety door that it bulged in and I was afraid the wobbly old button would fly off every minute.

"There was no doubt in my mind now. 'Twas a bear! and I just scrooted under mother's great washtub that 'Lisher had to sap up in and let it drop down over me.

"The next minute the button did fly off, and presently heavy feet scurried over the creaky floor, then the most awful nose went smelling around the tub.

"That set me off, and I screamed and beat on the tub with all my might.

"Whoosh! whoosh!' Mr. Bear wasn't prepared for such a racket, and off he shuffled into the woods still hooting.

"When 'Lisher came he thought I was out, half dead with fright and suffocation. I wouldn't stay any more nights, but I got my morocco. He 'Lisher said it was worth a pair of shoes to be scared so."

Mamma—I saw a little boy speak to you in church. I hope my little girl had more manners than to talk back.

Elsie—Oh, yes, ma, of course I had. I just stuck out my tongue at him.

At any rate, they were having a glorious time playing in the sand on the shore.

James remarked that the sand was lots finer in front of the hotel.

Babe peeped out from behind the boathouse and answered: "I'd rather play here."

"Yes, so would I," answered the boy.

Whether it was because the boathouse afforded shade, or because they didn't want the other children to join them, it is hard to tell, but probably the true reason was that the boathouse sheltered them from the hotel, and so from their mothers' and their nurses' eyes.

On the day our story opens arose their first dispute. After they had played together for several hours beside the boathouse, they wandered down nearer the water. They were busy playing, and did not notice the rising tide, until Babe jumped up and said: "Why, my dress is wet." She put her hand into her pocket for her handkerchief, as she pulled it out a string of beads fell into the water. They were immediately washed about two

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Careful Caroline
She always spreads some pillows upon the hard wood hall,
For fear the shadows might get hurt
Each evening when they fall.